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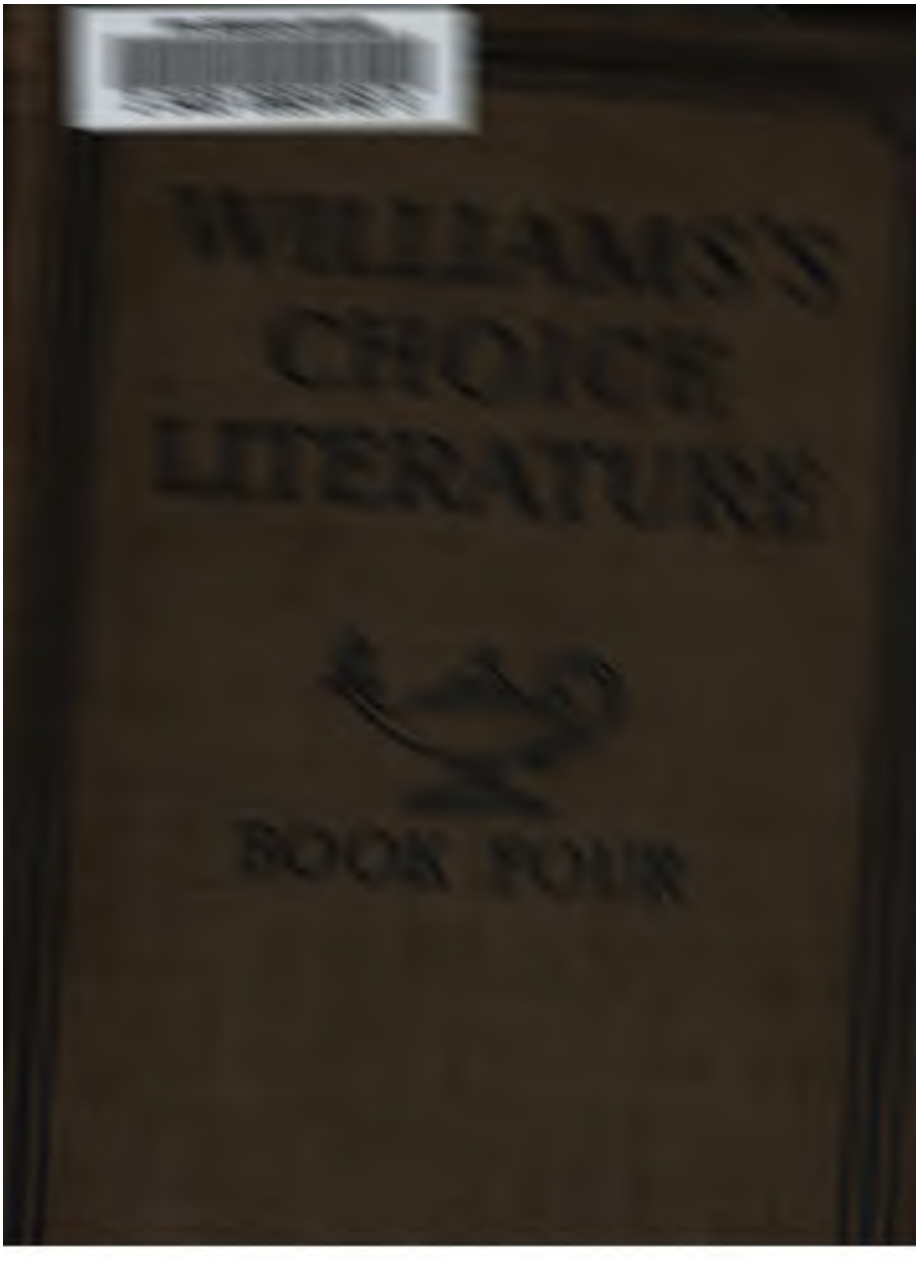
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BOOK FOUR

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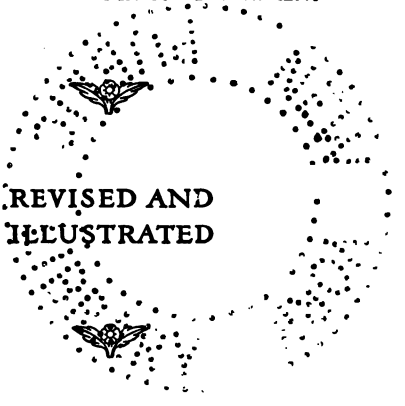

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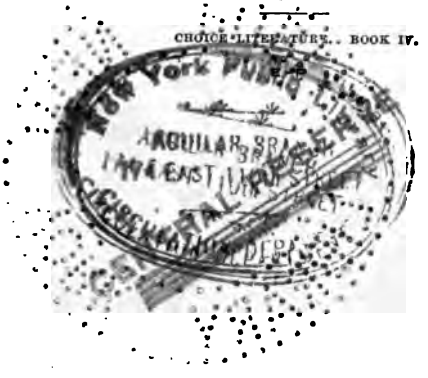

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PREFACE

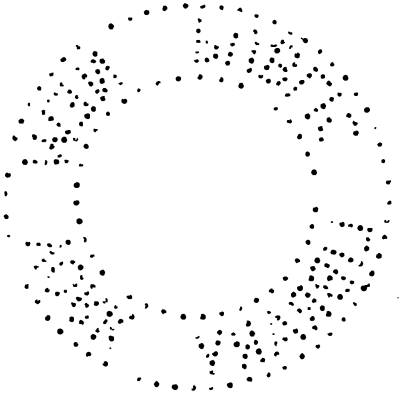
CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER once said, "To teach a child to read, and not teach it what to read, is to put a dangerous weapon into its hands."

The teacher should never forget that the mere calling of words, no matter how excellent the enunciation or perfect the pronunciation, is not reading. The pupil really reads only when he hears the sounds and sees the sights that the text describes, and follows the thought of the author. To develop this faculty is a very important part of the work of the teacher. This volume has many selections admirably adapted to this work.

The selections from Hawthorne, Cooper, and Longfellow are all excellent. The pupils may easily be led to see King Midas as a real personage: "The Pine Tree Shillings" and "The Miraculous Pitcher" present pictures that the pupil can easily visualize. The selections from Cooper can be made real occurrences in the mind of the pupil. Whittier's "Barefoot Boy," Jenner's "Signs of Rain," Scollard's "Jim Crow," and many of the other poems can be made very effective in work of this character.

Henry Hudson asks, "What sort of reading are our schools planting an appetite for? Are they really doing anything to instruct and form the mental taste, so that the pupils on leaving them may be safely left to choose their reading for themselves?"

The selections from Hawthorne, Longfellow, Alice Cary, Lucy Larcom, Whittier, Emerson, and Lowell, are made by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers of their works.



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CHOICE LITERATURE

BOOK FOUR

THE GOLDEN TOUCH

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

I

ONCE upon a time, there lived a very rich man, and a king besides, whose name was Midas; and he had a little daughter, whom nobody but myself ever heard of, and whose name I either never knew, or have entirely forgotten. So, because I love odd names for little girls, I choose to call her Marygold.

This King Midas was fonder of gold than of anything else in the world. He valued his royal crown chiefly because it was composed of that precious metal. If he loved anything better, or half so well, it was the one little maiden who played so merrily around her father's footstool. But the more Midas loved his daughter, the more did he desire and seek for wealth. He thought, foolish man! that the best thing he could possibly do for this dear child would be to bequeath her the immensest pile of yellow, glistening coin, that had ever been heaped to-

gether since the world was made. Thus, he gave all his thoughts and all his time to this one purpose. If ever he happened to gaze for an instant at the gold-tinted clouds of sunset, he wished that they were real gold, and that they could be squeezed safely into his strong box. When little Marygold ran to meet him, with a bunch of buttercups and dandelions, he used to say, "Poh, poh, child! If these flowers were as golden as they look, they would be worth the plucking!"

And yet, in his earlier days, before he was so entirely possessed of this insane desire for riches, King Midas had shown a great taste for flowers. He had planted a garden, in which grew the biggest and beautifullest and sweetest roses that any mortal ever saw or smelled. These roses were still growing in the garden, as large, as lovely, and as fragrant, as when Midas used to pass whole hours in gazing at them, and inhaling their perfume. But now, if he looked at them at all, it was only to calculate how much the garden would be worth if each of the innumerable rose petals were a thin plate of gold. And though he once was fond of music (in spite of an idle story about his ears, which were said to resemble those of an ass), the only music for poor Midas, now, was the chink of one coin against another.

At length (as people always grow more and more foolish, unless they take care to grow wiser and wiser), Midas had got to be so exceedingly unreasonable that he could scarcely bear to see or touch any object that was not gold. He made it his custom, therefore, to pass a large portion of every day in a dark and dreary apartment, under ground, at the basement of his palace. It

was here that he kept his wealth. To this dismal hole — for it was little better than a dungeon — Midas betook himself, whenever he wanted to be particularly happy. Here, after carefully locking the door, he would take a bag of gold coin, or a gold cup as big as a washbowl, or a heavy golden bar, or a peck measure of gold dust, and bring them from the obscure corners of the room into the one bright and narrow sunbeam that fell from the dungeonlike window. He valued the sunbeam for no other reason but that his treasure would not shine without its help. And then would he reckon over the coins in the bag; toss up the bar, and catch it as it came down; sift the gold dust through his fingers; look at the funny image of his own face, as reflected in the burnished circumference of the cup; and whisper to himself, "O Midas, rich King Midas, what a happy man art thou!" But it was laughable to see how the image of his face kept grinning at him out of the polished surface of the cup. It seemed to be aware of his foolish behavior, and to have a naughty inclination to make fun of him.

Midas called himself a happy man, but felt that he was not yet quite so happy as he might be. The very tiptop of enjoyment would never be reached, unless the whole world were to become his treasure room, and be filled with yellow metal which should be all his own.

Now, I need hardly remind such wise little people as you are, that in the old, old times, when King Midas was alive, a great many things came to pass, which we should consider wonderful if they were to happen in our own day and country. And, on the other hand, a great many things take place nowadays, which seem not only wonder-

ful to us, but at which the people of old times would have stared their eyes out. On the whole, I regard our own times as the strangest of the two; but, however that may be, I must go on with my story.

Midas was enjoying himself in his treasure room, one day, as usual, when he perceived a shadow fall over the heaps of gold; and, looking suddenly up, what should he

behold but the figure of a stranger, standing in the bright and narrow sunbeam! It was a young man, with a cheerful and ruddy face. Whether it was that the imagination of King Midas threw a yellow tinge over everything, or whatever the cause might be, he could not help fancying that the smile with which the stranger regarded him had a kind of golden radiance in it. Cer-

tainly, although his figure intercepted the sunshine, there was now a brighter gleam upon all the piled-up treasures than before. Even the remotest corners had their share of it, and were lighted up, when the stranger smiled, as with tips of flame and sparkles of fire.

As Midas knew that he had carefully turned the key in the lock, and that no mortal strength could possibly break into his treasure room, he, of course, concluded that his visitor must be something more than mortal. It is no matter about telling you who he was. In those days, when the earth was comparatively a new affair, it was supposed to be often the resort of beings endowed with supernatural power, and who used to interest themselves in the joys and sorrows of men, women, and children, half playfully and half seriously. Midas had met such beings before now, and was not sorry to meet one of them again. The stranger's aspect, indeed, was so good-humored and kindly, if not beneficent, that it would have been unreasonable to suspect him of intending any mischief. It was far more probable that he came to do Midas a favor. And what could that favor be, unless to multiply his heaps of treasure?

II

The stranger gazed about the room; and when his lustrous smile had glistened upon all the golden objects that were there, he turned again to Midas.

"You are a wealthy man, friend Midas!" he observed. "I doubt whether any other four walls, on earth, contain so much gold as you have contrived to pile up in this room."

"I have done pretty well, — pretty well," answered Midas, in a discontented tone. "But, after all, it is but a trifle, when you consider that it has taken me my whole life to get it together. If one could live a thousand years, he might have time to grow rich!"

"What!" exclaimed the stranger. "Then you are not satisfied?"

Midas shook his head.

"And pray what would satisfy you?" asked the stranger. "Merely for the curiosity of the thing, I should be glad to know."

Midas paused and meditated. He felt a presentiment that this stranger, with such a golden luster in his good-humored smile, had come hither with both the power and the purpose of gratifying his utmost wishes. Now, therefore, was the fortunate moment, when he had but to speak, and obtain whatever possible, or seemingly impossible, thing it might come into his head to ask. So he thought, and thought, and thought, and heaped up one golden mountain upon another, in his imagination, without being able to imagine them big enough. At last, a bright idea occurred to King Midas. It seemed really as bright as the glistening metal which he loved so much.

Raising his head, he looked the lustrous stranger in the face.

"Well, Midas," observed his visitor, "I see that you have at length hit upon something that will satisfy you. Tell me your wish."

"It is only this," replied Midas. "I am weary of collecting my treasures with so much trouble, and beholding

the heap so diminutive, after I have done my best. I wish everything that I touch to be changed to gold!"

The stranger's smile grew so very broad that it seemed to fill the room like an outburst of the sun, gleaming into a shadowy dell, where the yellow autumnal leaves — for so looked the lumps and particles of gold — lie strewn in the glow of light.

"The Golden Touch!" exclaimed he. "You certainly deserve credit, friend Midas, for striking out so brilliant a conception.[1] But you are quite sure that this will satisfy you?"

"How could it fail?" said Midas.

"And will you never regret the possession of it?"

"What could induce me?" asked Midas. "I ask nothing else, to render me perfectly happy."

"Be it as you wish, then," replied the stranger, waving his hand in token of farewell. "To-morrow, at sunrise, you will find yourself gifted with the Golden Touch."

The figure of the stranger then became exceedingly bright, and Midas involuntarily closed his eyes. On opening them again, he beheld only one yellow sunbeam in the room, and, all around him, the glistening of the precious metal which he had spent his life in hoarding up.

Whether Midas slept as usual that night, the story does not say. Asleep or awake, however, his mind was probably in the state of a child's, to whom a beautiful new plaything has been promised in the morning. At any rate, day had hardly peeped over the hills, when King Midas was broad awake, and, stretching his arms out of bed, began to touch the objects that were within reach.

[1] Thought.

He was anxious to prove whether the Golden Touch had really come, according to the stranger's promise. So he laid his finger on a chair by the bedside, and on various other things, but was grievously disappointed to perceive that they remained of exactly the same substance as before. Indeed, he felt very much afraid that he had only dreamed about the lustrous stranger, or else that the latter had been making game of him. And what a miserable affair would it be, if, after all his hopes, Midas must content himself with what little gold he could scrape together by ordinary means, instead of creating it by a touch!

All this while, it was only the gray of the morning, with but a streak of brightness along the edge of the sky, where Midas could not see it. He lay in a very disconsolate mood, regretting the downfall of his hopes, and kept growing sadder and sadder, until the earliest sunbeam shone through the window, and gilded the ceiling over his head. It seemed to Midas that this bright yellow sunbeam was reflected in rather a singular way on the white covering of the bed. Looking more closely, what was his astonishment and delight when he found that this linen fabric had been transmuted[1] to what seemed a woven texture of the purest and brightest gold! The Golden Touch had come to him with the first sunbeam!

Midas started up, in a kind of joyful frenzy, and ran about the room, grasping at everything that happened to be in his way. He seized one of the bedposts, and it became immediately a fluted golden pillar. He pulled aside a window curtain, in order to admit a clear spectacle

[1] Changed.

of the wonders which he was performing; and the tassel grew heavy in his hand, — a mass of gold. He took up a book from the table. At his first touch it assumed the appearance of such a splendidly bound and gilt-edged volume as one often meets with, nowadays; but, on running his fingers through the leaves, behold! it was a bundle of thin golden plates, in which all the wisdom of the book had grown illegible.[1] He hurriedly put on his clothes, and was enraptured[2] to see himself in a magnificent[3] suit of gold cloth, which retained its flexibility[4] and softness, although it burdened him a little with its weight. He drew out his handkerchief, which little Marygold had hemmed for him. That was likewise gold, with the dear child's neat and pretty stitches running all along the border, in gold thread!

Somehow or other, this last transformation[5] did not quite please King Midas. He would rather that his little daughter's handiwork should have remained just the same as when she climbed his knee and put it into his hand.

But it was not worth while to vex himself about a trifle. Midas now took his spectacles from his pocket, and put them on his nose, in order that he might see more distinctly what he was about. In those days, spectacles for common people had not been invented, but were already worn by kings; else, how could Midas have had any? To his great perplexity, however, excellent as the glasses were, he discovered that he could not possibly see through them. But this was the most natural thing in the world; for, on taking them off, the transparent[6] crystals turned

[1] Not easily read. [2] Greatly delighted. [3] Splendid.
[4] Easily bent or folded. [5] Change. [6] That which can be seen through.

out to be plates of yellow metal, and, of course, were worthless as spectacles, though valuable as gold. It struck Midas as rather inconvenient that, with all his wealth, he could never again be rich enough to own a pair of serviceable [1] spectacles.

"It is no great matter, nevertheless," said he to himself, very philosophically. "We cannot expect any great good, without its being accompanied with some small inconvenience. The Golden Touch is worth the sacrifice of a pair of spectacles, at least, if not of one's very eyesight. My own eyes will serve for ordinary purposes, and little Marygold will soon be old enough to read to me."

Wise King Midas was so exalted by his good fortune that the palace seemed not sufficiently spacious to contain him. He therefore went downstairs, and smiled, on observing that the balustrade of the staircase became a bar of burnished gold, as his hand passed over it, in his descent. He lifted the door latch (it was brass only a moment ago, but golden when his fingers quitted it) and emerged into the garden. Here, as it happened, he found a great number of beautiful roses in full bloom, and others in all the stages of lovely bud and blossom. Very delicious was their fragrance in the morning breeze. Their delicate blush was one of the fairest sights in the world; so gentle, so modest, and so full of sweet tranquillity,[2] did these roses seem to be.

But Midas knew a way to make them far more precious, according to his way of thinking, than roses had ever been before. So he took great pains in going from bush to bush, and exercised his magic touch most indefatigably;[3]

[1] That which is of use. [2] State of rest. [3] Without getting tired.

until every individual flower and bud, and even the worms at the heart of some of them, were changed to gold. By the time this good work was completed, King Midas was summoned to breakfast; and as the morning air had given him an excellent appetite, he made haste back to the palace.

What was usually a king's breakfast in the days of Midas, I really do not know, and cannot stop now to investigate.[1] To the best of my belief, however, on this particular morning, the breakfast consisted of hot cakes, some nice little brook trout, roasted potatoes, fresh-boiled eggs, and coffee, for King Midas himself, and a bowl of bread and milk for his daughter Marygold. At all events, this is a breakfast fit to set before a king; and, whether he had it or not, King Midas could not have had a better.

III

Little Marygold had not yet made her appearance. Her father ordered her to be called, and, seating himself at table, awaited the child's coming, in order to begin his own breakfast. To do Midas justice, he really loved his daughter, and loved her so much the more this morning, on account of the good fortune which had befallen him. It was not a great while before he heard her coming along the passageway crying bitterly. This circumstance surprised him, because Marygold was one of the cheerfullest little people whom you would see in a summer's day, and hardly shed a thimbleful of tears in a twelvemonth. When Midas heard her sobs, he determined to put little Mary-

[1] Find out.

gold into better spirits, by an agreeable surprise; so, leaning across the table, he touched his daughter's bowl (which was a China one, with pretty figures all around it) and transmuted it to gleaming gold.

Meanwhile, Marygold slowly and disconsolately opened the door, and showed herself with her apron at her eyes, still sobbing as if her heart would break.

"How now, my little lady!" cried Midas. "Pray what is the matter with you, this bright morning?"

Marygold, without taking the apron from her eyes, held out her hand, in which was one of the roses which Midas had so recently transmuted.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed her father. "And what is there in this magnificent golden rose to make you cry?"

"Ah, dear father!" answered the child, as well as her sobs would let her; "it is not beautiful, but the ugliest flower that ever grew! As soon as I was dressed I ran into the garden to gather some roses for you; because I know you like them, and like them the better when gathered by your little daughter. But, oh, dear, dear me!

What do you think has happened? Such a misfortune! All the beautiful roses, that smelled so sweetly and had so many lovely blushes, are blighted and spoiled! They are grown quite yellow, as you see this one, and have no longer any fragrance! What can have been the matter with them?"

"Poh, my dear little girl, — pray don't cry about it!" said Midas, who was ashamed to confess that he himself had wrought the change which so greatly afflicted her. "Sit down and eat your bread and milk! You will find it easy enough to exchange a golden rose like that (which will last hundreds of years) for an ordinary one which would wither in a day."

"I don't care for such roses as this!" cried Marygold, tossing it contemptuously[1] away. "It has no smell, and the hard petals prick my nose!"

The child now sat down to the table, but was so occupied with her grief for the blighted roses that she did not even notice the wonderful transmutation of her China bowl. Perhaps this was all the better; for Marygold was accustomed to take pleasure in looking at the queer figures, and strange trees and houses, that were painted on the circumference of the bowl; and these ornaments were now entirely lost in the yellow hue of the metal.

Midas, meanwhile, had poured out a cup of coffee, and, as a matter of course, the coffeepot, whatever metal it may have been when he took it up, was gold when he set it down. He thought to himself that it was rather an extravagant style of splendor, in a king of his simple habits, to breakfast off a service of gold, and began to be puzzled

[1] As not worthy.

with the difficulty of keeping his treasures safe. The cupboard and the kitchen would no longer be a secure place of deposit for articles so valuable as golden bowls and coffeepots.

Amid these thoughts, he lifted a spoonful of coffee to his lips, and, sipping it, was astonished to perceive that, the instant his lips touched the liquid, it became molten gold, and, the next moment, hardened into a lump!

"Ha!" exclaimed Midas, rather aghast.

"What is the matter, father?" asked little Marygold gazing at him, with the tears still standing in her eyes.

"Nothing, child, nothing!" said Midas. "Eat your milk, before it gets quite cold."

He took one of the nice little trouts on his plate, and, by way of experiment, touched its tail with his finger. To his horror it was immediately transmuted from an admirably fried brook trout into a goldfish, though not one of those goldfishes which people often keep in glass globes, as ornaments for the parlor. No; but it was really a metallic fish, and looked as if it had been very cunningly made by the nicest goldsmith in the world. Its little bones were now golden wires; its fins and tail were thin plates of gold; and there were the marks of the fork in it, and all the delicate, frothy appearance of a nicely fried fish, exactly imitated in metal. A very pretty piece of work, as you may suppose; only King Midas, just at that moment, would much rather have had a real trout in his dish than this elaborate and valuable imitation of one.

"I don't quite see," thought he to himself, "how I am to get any breakfast!"

He took one of the smoking-hot cakes, and had scarcely

broken it, when, to his cruel mortification, though, a moment before, it had been of the whitest wheat, it assumed the yellow hue of Indian meal. To say the truth, if it had really been a hot Indian cake, Midas would have prized it a good deal more than he now did, when its solidity and increased weight made him too bitterly sensible that it was gold. Almost in despair, he helped himself to a boiled egg, which immediately underwent a change similar to those of the trout and the cake. The egg, indeed, might have been mistaken for one of those which the famous goose, in the storybook, was in the habit of laying; but King Midas was the only goose that had had anything to do with the matter.

"Well, this is a quandary![1]" thought he, leaning back in his chair, and looking quite enviously at little Marygold, who was now eating her bread and milk with great satisfaction. "Such a costly breakfast before me, and nothing that can be eaten!"

Hoping that, by dint of great dispatch, he might avoid what he now felt to be a considerable inconvenience, King Midas next snatched a hot potato, and attempted to cram it into his mouth, and swallow it in a hurry. But the Golden Touch was too nimble for him. He found his mouth full, not of mealy potato, but of solid metal, which so burned his tongue that he roared aloud, and, jumping up from the table, began to dance and stamp about the room, both with pain and affright.

"Father, dear father!" cried little Marygold, who was a very affectionate child, "pray what is the matter? Have you burned your mouth?"

[1] Something perplexing.

"Ah, dear child," groaned Midas, dolefully, "I don't know what is to become of your poor father!"

And, truly, my dear little folks, did you ever hear of such a pitiable case in all your lives? Here was literally the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing. The poorest laborer, sitting down to his crust of bread and cup of water, was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was really worth its weight in gold. And what was to be done? Already, at breakfast, Midas was excessively [1] hungry. Would he be less so by dinner time? And how ravenous [2] would be his appetite for supper, which must undoubtedly consist of the same sort of indigestible dishes as those now before him! How many days, think you, would he survive a continuance of this rich fare?

These reflections so troubled wise King Midas that he began to doubt whether, after all, riches are the one desirable thing in the world, or even the most desirable. But this was only a passing thought. So fascinated was Midas with the glitter of the yellow metal that he would still have refused to give up the Golden Touch for so paltry a consideration as a breakfast. Just imagine what a price for one meal's victuals! It would have been the same as paying millions and millions of money (and as many millions more as would take forever to reckon up) for some fried trout, an egg, a potato, a hot cake, and a cup of coffee!

"It would be quite too dear," thought Midas.

Nevertheless, so great was his hunger, and the perplexity

[1] Very. [2] Extremely hungry.

of his situation, that he again groaned aloud, and very grievously, too. Our pretty Marygold could endure it no longer. She sat, a moment, gazing at her father, and trying, with all the might of her little wits, to find out what was the matter with him. Then with a sweet and sorrowful impulse to comfort him, she started from her chair, and, running to Midas, threw her arms affectionately about his knees. He bent down and kissed her. He felt that his little daughter's love was worth a thousand times more than he had gained by the Golden Touch.

"My precious, precious Marygold!" cried he.

But Marygold made no answer.

Alas, what had he done? How fatal was the gift which the stranger bestowed! The moment the lips of Midas touched Marygold's forehead, a change had taken place. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of affection as it had been, assumed a glittering yellow color, with yellow teardrops congealing[1] on her cheeks. Her beautiful brown ringlets took the same tint. Her soft and tender little form grew hard and inflexible[2] within her father's encircling arms. Oh, terrible misfortune! The victim of his insatiable[3] desire for wealth, little Marygold was a human child no longer, but a golden statue!

Yes, there she was, with the questioning look of love, grief, and pity hardened into her face. It was the prettiest and most woeful sight that ever mortal saw. All the features and tokens of Marygold were there; even the beloved little dimple remained in her golden chin. But, the more perfect was the resemblance, the greater was

[1] Turning solid. [2] Not to be bent or changed in form.
[3] Not to be satisfied.

the father's agony at beholding his golden image, which was all that was left him of a daughter. It had been a favorite phrase of Midas, whenever he felt particularly fond of the child, to say that she was worth her weight in gold. And now the phrase had become literally true. And now, at last, when it was too late, he felt how infinitely a warm and tender heart, that loved him, exceeded in value all the wealth that could be piled up betwixt the earth and sky!

It would be too sad a story, if I were to tell you how Midas, in the fullness of all his gratified desires, began to wring his hands and bemoan himself; and how he could neither bear to look at Marygold, nor yet to look away from her. Except when his eyes were fixed on the image, he could not possibly believe that she was changed to gold. But, stealing another glance, there was the precious little figure, with a yellow teardrop on its yellow cheek, and a look so piteous and tender, that it seemed as if that very expression must needs soften the gold, and make it flesh again. This, however, could not be. So Midas had only to wring his hands, and to wish that he were the poorest man in the wide world, if the loss of all his wealth might bring back the faintest rose color to his dear child's face.

IV

While he was in this tumult of despair, he suddenly beheld a stranger standing near the door. Midas bent down his head, without speaking; for he recognized the same figure which had appeared to him, the day before, in the treasure room, and had bestowed on him this disastrous faculty of the Golden Touch. The stranger's

countenance still wore a smile, which seemed to shed a yellow luster all about the room, and gleamed on little Marygold's image, and on the other objects that had been transmuted by the touch of Midas.

"Well, friend Midas," said the stranger, "pray how do you succeed with the Golden Touch?"

Midas shook his head.

"I am very miserable," said he.

"Very miserable, indeed!" exclaimed the stranger. "And how happens that? Have I not faithfully kept my promise with you? Have you not everything that your heart desired?"

"Gold is not everything," answered Midas. "And I have lost all that my heart really cared for."

"Ah! So you have made a discovery, since yesterday?" observed the stranger. "Let us see, then. Which of these two things do you think is really worth the most,—the gift of the Golden Touch, or one cup of clear cold water?"

"O blessed water!" exclaimed Midas. "It will never moisten my parched throat again!"

"The Golden Touch," continued the stranger, "or a crust of bread?"

"A piece of bread," answered Midas, "is worth all the gold on earth!"

"The Golden Touch," asked the stranger, "or your own little Marygold, warm, soft, and loving as she was an hour ago?"

"O my child, my dear child!" cried poor Midas, wringing his hands. "I would not have given that one small dimple in her chin for the power of changing this whole big earth into a solid lump of gold!"

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas!" said the stranger, looking seriously at him. "Your own heart, I perceive, has not been entirely changed from flesh to gold. Were it so, your case would indeed be desperate. But you appear to be still capable of understanding that the commonest things, such as lie within everybody's grasp, are more valuable than the riches which so many mortals sigh and struggle after. Tell me, now, do you sincerely desire to rid yourself of this Golden Touch?"

"It is hateful to me!" replied Midas.

A fly settled on his nose, but immediately fell to the floor; for it, too, had become gold. Midas shuddered.

"Go, then," said the stranger, "and plunge into the river that glides past the bottom of your garden. Take likewise a vase of the same water, and sprinkle it over any object that you may desire to change back again from gold into its former substance. If you do this in earnestness and sincerity, it may possibly repair the mischief which your avarice has occasioned."

King Midas bowed low; and when he lifted his head, the lustrous stranger had vanished.

You will easily believe that Midas lost no time in snatching up a great earthen pitcher (but, alas me! it was no longer earthen after he touched it), and hastening to the riverside. As he scampered along, and forced his way through the shrubbery, it was positively marvelous to see how the foliage turned yellow behind him, as if the autumn had been there, and nowhere else. On reaching the river's brink, he plunged headlong in.

"Poof! Poof! Poof!" snorted King Midas, as his head emerged out of the water. "Well; this is really a re-

freshing bath, and I think it must have quite washed away the Golden Touch. And now for filling my pitcher!"

As he dipped the pitcher into the water, it gladdened his very heart to see it change from gold into the same good, honest earthen vessel which it had been before he touched it. He was conscious, also, of a change within himself. A cold, hard, and heavy weight seemed to have gone out of his bosom. No doubt, his heart had been gradually losing its human substance, and transmuting itself into insensible metal, but had now softened back again into flesh. Perceiving a violet, that grew on the bank of the river, Midas touched it with his finger, and was overjoyed to find that the delicate flower retained its purple hue, instead of undergoing a yellow blight. The curse of the Golden Touch had, therefore, really been removed from him.

King Midas hastened back to the palace; and, I suppose, the servants knew not what to make of it when they saw their royal master so carefully bringing home an earthen pitcher of water. But that water, which was to undo all the mischief that his folly had wrought, was more precious to Midas than an ocean of molten gold could have been. The first thing he did, as you need hardly be told, was to sprinkle it by handfuls over the golden figure of little Marygold.

No sooner did it fall on her than you would have laughed to see how the rosy color came back to the dear child's cheek! And how she began to sneeze and sputter! And how astonished she was to find herself dripping wet, and her father still throwing more water over her!

"Pray do not, dear father!" cried she. "See how you have wet my nice frock, which I put on only this morning!"

For Marygold did not know that she had been a little golden statue; nor could she remember anything that had happened since the moment when she ran with outstretched arms to comfort poor King Midas.

Her father did not think it necessary to tell his beloved child how very foolish he had been, but contented himself with showing how much wiser he had now grown. For this purpose, he led little Marygold into the garden, where he sprinkled all the remainder of the water over the rosebushes, and with such good effect that above five thousand roses recovered their beautiful bloom. There were two circumstances, however, which, as long as he lived, used to put King Midas in mind of the Golden Touch. One was, that the sands of the river sparkled like gold; the other, that little Marygold's hair had now a golden tinge, which he had never observed in it before she had been transmuted

by the effect of his kiss. This change of hue was really an improvement, and made Marygold's hair richer than in her babyhood.

When King Midas had grown quite an old man, and used to trot Marygold's children on his knee, he was fond of telling them this marvelous story, pretty much as I have now told it to you. And then would he stroke their glossy ringlets, and tell them that their hair, likewise, had a rich shade of gold, which they had inherited from their mother.

"And to tell you the truth, my precious little folks," quoth King Midas, diligently trotting the children all the while, "ever since that morning, I have hated the very sight of all other gold, save this!"

FAIRY FOLK

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men:
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together:
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather.

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home, —
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide foam:

Some in the reeds
  Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watchdogs,
  All night awake.

High on the hilltop
  The old king sits:
He is now so old and gray
  He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
  Columbkill he crosses,
On his stately journeys
  From Slieveleague to Rosses:

Or going up with music
  On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
  Of the gay Northern Lights.
They stole little Bridget
  For seven years long;
When she came down again
  Her friends were all gone.

They took her lightly back,
  Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
  But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
  Deep within the lakes,
On a bed of flag leaves,
  Watching till she wakes.

By the craggy hillside,
  Through the mosses bare
They planted thorn trees
  For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
  As dig one up in spite,
He shall find the thornies set
  In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
  For fear of little men:
Wee folk, good folk,
  Trooping all together:
Green jacket, red cap,
  And white owl feather!

THE BLUEBIRD

EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER

I KNOW the song that the bluebird is singing,
  Out in the apple tree where he is swinging.
Brave little fellow! The skies may be dreary,
Nothing cares he while his heart is so cheery.

Hark! How the music leaps out of his throat!
Hark! Was there ever so merry a note?
Listen awhile, and you'll hear what he's saying,
Up in the apple tree, swinging and swaying:

"Dear little blossoms, down under the snow,
You must be weary of winter, I know;
Hark! While I sing you a message of cheer,
Summer is coming, and springtime is here!

"Little white snowdrop, I pray you, arise;
Bright yellow crocus, come, open your eyes;
Sweet little violets hid from the cold,
Put on your mantles of purple and gold:
Daffodils, daffodils, say, do you hear?
Summer is coming and springtime is here!"

HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

BY the shores of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

There the wrinkled old Nokomis
Nursed the little Hiawatha,
Rocked him in his linden cradle,

Bedded soft in moss and rushes,
Safely bound with reindeer sinews ;
Stilled his fretful wail by saying,
"Hush ! The Naked Bear will hear thee !"
Lulled him into slumber, singing,
"Ewa-yea ! My little owlet !
Who is this that lights the wigwam ?
With his great eyes lights the wigwam ?
Ewa-yea, my little owlet ! "

Many things Nokomis taught him
Of the stars that shine in heaven !
Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet,
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses ;
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits,
Warriors with their plumes and war clubs,
Flaring far away to northward
In the frosty nights of winter ;
Showed the broad, white road in heaven,[1]
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows,
Running straight across the heavens,
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows.

At the door on summer evenings,
Sat the little Hiawatha ;
Heard the whispering of the pine trees,
Heard the lapping of the water,
Sounds of music, words of wonder ;
"Minnie-wawa ! " said the pine trees,
"Mudway-aushka ! " said the water :

[1] The milky way.

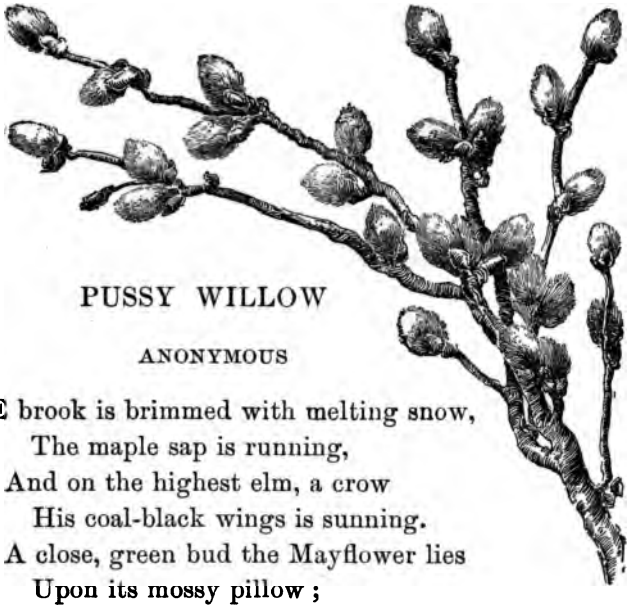
Saw the firefly, Wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him:
"Wah-wah-taysee, little firefly,
Little, flittering, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!"

Saw the moon rise from the water,
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"Once a warrior, very angry,
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight;
Right against the moon he threw her;
'Tis her body that you see there."

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
In the eastern sky, the rainbow,
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"'Tis the heaven of flowers you see there;
All the wild flowers of the forest,
All the lilies of the prairie,

When on earth they fade and perish,
Blossom in that heaven above us."
When he heard the owls at midnight,
Hooting, laughing in the forest,
"What is that?" he cried in terror;
"What is that," he said, "Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"That is but the owl and owlet,
Talking in their native language,
Talking, scolding at each other."

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in summer,
Where they hid themselves in winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's chickens."
Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."



PUSSY WILLOW

ANONYMOUS

THE brook is brimmed with melting snow,
The maple sap is running,
And on the highest elm, a crow
His coal-black wings is sunning.
A close, green bud the Mayflower lies
Upon its mossy pillow;
And sweet and low the south wind blows,
And through the brown fields calling goes,
"Come, Pussy! Pussy Willow!"

Soon red will bud the maple trees,
The bluebirds will be singing,
The yellow tassels in the breeze
Be from the poplars swinging.
And rosy will the Mayflower be
Upon its mossy pillow,
But you must come the first of all—
"Come, Pussy!" is the South Wind's call,
"Come, Pussy! Pussy Willow!
Within your close, brown wrapper stir,

Come out and show your silver fur,
Come, Pussy ! Pussy Willow ! "

SIGNS OF RAIN

EDWARD JENNER

THE hollow winds begin to blow,
The clouds look black, the glass [1] is low,
The soot falls down, the spaniels sleep,
The spiders from their cobwebs peep:
Last night the sun went pale to bed,
The moon in halos hid her head;
The boding shepherd heaves a sigh,
For, see, a rainbow spans the sky:
The walls are damp, the ditches smell,
Closed is the pink-eyed pimpernel.
Hark how the chairs and table crack !
Old Betty's joints are on the rack;
Loud quack the ducks, the peacocks cry,
The distant hills are seeming nigh.
How restless are the snorting swine;
The busy flies disturb the kine;
Low o'er the grass the swallow wings,
The cricket, too, how sharp he sings;
Puss on the hearth, with velvet paws,
Sits wiping o'er her whiskered jaws.
Through the clear stream the fishes rise,
And nimbly catch the incautious flies.

[1] That is, the mercury in the barometer is low.

The glowworms, numerous and bright,
Illumed the dewy dell last night.
At dusk the squalid toad was seen,
Hopping and crawling o'er the green:
The whirling wind, the dust obeys,
And in the rapid eddy plays;
The frog has changed his yellow vest,
And in a russet coat is dressed.
Though June, the air is cold and still,
The mellow blackbird's voice is shrill.
My dog, so altered in his taste,
Quits mutton bones, on grass to feast;
And see yon rooks, how odd their flight,
They imitate the gliding kite,
And seem precipitate to fall,
As if they felt the piercing ball.
"'Twill surely rain, I see with sorrow
Our jaunt must be put off to-morrow."

Ask the pupils how many of them have heard of any of these
ns of rain.

A SONG OF AUTUMN

JAMES BUCKHAM

HO for the bending sheaves,
Ho for the crimson leaves,
Flaming in splendor!
Season of ripened gold,
Plenty in crib and fold,
Skies with depth untold,
Liquid and tender.

Far, like the smile of God,
See how the goldenrod
  Ripples and tosses!
Yonder, a crimson vine
Trails from a bearded pine,
This as a thread of wine
  Staining the mosses.

Autumn is here again —
Banners on hill and plain
  Blazing and flying.
Hail to the amber morn,
Hail to the heaped-up corn,
Hail to the hunter's horn,
  Swelling and dying.

A CHILD'S FANCY

ANONYMOUS

O LITTLE flowers, you love me so,
  You could not do without me;
O little birds that come and go,
  You sing sweet songs about me;
O little moss, observed by few,
  That round the tree is creeping,
You like my head to rest on you,
  When I am idly sleeping.

O rushes by the riverside,
  You bow when I come near you;
O fish, you leap about with pride,
  Because you think I hear you;

O river, you shine clear and bright,
To tempt me to look in you;
O water lilies, pure and white,
You hope that I shall win you.

O pretty things, you love me so,
I see I must not leave you;
You'd find it very dull, I know,
I should not like to grieve you.
Don't wrinkle up, you silly moss;
My flowers, you need not shiver;
My little buds, don't look so cross;
Don't talk so loud, my river.

And I will make a promise, dears,
That will content you, maybe;
I'll love you through the happy years,
Till I'm a nice old lady!
True love (like yours and mine) they say
Can never think of ceasing,
But year by year, and day by day,
Keeps steadily increasing.

THE VICAR'S SERMON

CHARLES MACKAY

WHATSOE'ER you find to do,
Do it, boys, with all your might;
Never be a little true,
Or a little in the right.
Trifles even lead to Heaven;

Trifles make the life of man:
So in all things, great and small things,
Be as thorough as you can.

Let no speck their surface dim, —
Spotless truth and honor bright;
I'd not give a fig for him
Who says that any lie is white!
He who falters, twists or alters
Little atoms when we speak,
May deceive me, but, believe me,
To himself he is a sneak.

Help the weak if you are strong;
Love the old if you are young;
Own a fault if you are wrong;
If you're angry, hold your tongue.
In each duty there's a beauty,
If your eyes you do not shut,
Just as surely and securely
As a kernel in a nut.

Love with all your heart and soul,
Love with eye and ear and touch.
That's the moral of the whole:
You can never love too much!
'Tis the glory of the story
In our babyhood begun;
Hearts without it, never doubt it,
Are as worlds without a sun.

If you think a word will please,
Say it, if it is but true;

Words may give delight with ease
When no act is asked from you.
Words may often soothe and soften,
Gild a joy and heal a pain ;
They are treasures yielding pleasures
It is wicked to retain.

LITTLE MAY

EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER

HAVE you heard the waters singing,
Little May,
Where the willows green are bending
O'er their way ?
Do you know how low and sweet,
O'er the pebbles at their feet,
Are the words the waves repeat,
Night and day ?

Have you heard the robins singing,
Little one,
When the rosy dawn is breaking, —
When 'tis done?
Have you heard the wooing breeze,
In the blossomed orchard trees,
And the drowsy hum of bees
In the sun?

All the earth is full of music,
Little May, —

Bird, and bee, and water singing
On its way.
Let their silver voices fall
On thy heart with happy call:
"Praise the Lord, who loveth all,"
Night and day,
Little May.

ONLY A BABY SMALL

MATTHIAS BARR

ONLY a baby small,
Dropped from the skies;
Only a laughing face,
Two sunny eyes:
Only two cherry lips,
One chubby nose;
Only two little hands,
Ten little toes.

Only a golden head,
Curly and soft;
Only a tongue that wags
Loudly and oft;
Only a little brain,
Empty of thought;
Only a little heart,
Troubled with naught.

Only a tender flower
Sent us to rear;

Only a life to love
  While we are here;
Only a baby small,
  Never at rest;
Small, but how dear to us,
  God knoweth best.

SIR ROBIN

LUCY LARCOM

ROLLICKING Robin is here again.
What does he care for the April rain?
Care for it? Glad of it. Doesn't he know
That the April rain carries off the snow,
And coaxes out leaves to shadow his nest,
And washes his pretty red Easter vest,
And makes the juice of the cherry sweet,
For his hungry little robins to eat?
"Ha, ha, ha!" hear the jolly bird laugh,
"That isn't the best of the story by half!"

Gentleman Robin, he walks up and down,
Dressed in orange-tawny and black and brown.
Though his eye is so proud and his step so firm,
He can always stoop to pick up a worm.

With a twist of his head, and a strut and a hop,
To his Robin-wife, in the peach-tree top,
Chirping her heart out, he calls: "My dear,
You don't earn your living! Come here! Come here!
Ha, ha, ha! Life is lovely and sweet;
But what would it be if we'd nothing to eat?"

Robin, Sir Robin, gay, red-vested knight,
Now you have come to us, summer's in sight.
You never dream of the wonders you bring, —
Visions that follow the flash of your wing.
How all the beautiful By-and-by
Around you and after you seems to fly!
Sing on, or eat on, as pleases your mind!
Well have you earned every morsel you find.
"Ay! Ha, ha, ha!" whistles Robin. "My dear,
Let us all take our own choice of good cheer!"

PANDORA

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

The following is one of a number of the Classical Myths told by Hawthorne in two volumes, known as "Wonder-Book" and "Tanglewood Tales."

Hawthorne was born at Salem, Mass., July 4, 1804. He died at Plymouth, N.H., in 1864. Besides the two books already mentioned, Mr. Hawthorne wrote "Grandfather's Chair" and "Biographical Stories," especially for young people.

LONG, long ago, when this old world was in its tender infancy, there was a child, named Epimetheus, who

never had either father or mother; and, that he might not be lonely, another child, fatherless and motherless like himself, was sent from a far country, to live with him, and be his playfellow and helpmate. Her name was Pandora.

The first thing that Pandora saw, when she entered the cottage where Epimetheus dwelt, was a great box. And almost the first question which she put to him, after crossing the threshold, was this, —

"Epimetheus, what have you in that box?"

"My dear little Pandora," answered Epimetheus, "that is a secret, and you must be kind enough not to ask any questions about it. The box was left here to be kept safely, and I do not know myself what it contains."

"But who gave it to you?" asked Pandora. "And where did it come from?"

"That is a secret, too," replied Epimetheus.

"How provoking!" exclaimed Pandora, pouting her lip. "I wish the great ugly box were out of the way!"

"Oh, come, don't think of it any more," cried Epimetheus. "Let us run out of doors, and have some nice play with the other children."

It is thousands of years since Epimetheus and Pandora were alive; and the world nowadays is a very different sort of thing from what it was in their time. Then, everybody was a child. There needed no fathers and mothers to take care of the children, because there was no danger, nor trouble of any kind, and no clothes to be mended, and there was always plenty to eat and drink. Whenever a child wanted his dinner, he found it growing on a tree; and, if he looked at the tree in the morning, he could see the expanding blossom of that night's supper; or, at eventide, he saw the tender bud of to-morrow's breakfast. It was a very pleasant life, indeed. No labor to be done, no tasks to be studied; nothing but sports and dances, and sweet voices of children talking, or caroling like birds, or gushing out in merry laughter, throughout the livelong day.

What was most wonderful of all, the children never quarreled among themselves; neither had they any crying fits; nor, since time first began, had a single one of these little mortals ever gone apart into a corner and sulked. Oh, what a good time that was to be alive in! The truth is, those ugly little winged monsters, called Troubles, which are now almost as numerous as mosquitoes, had never yet been seen on earth. It is probable that the very greatest disquietude which a child had ever experienced was Pandora's vexation at not being able to discover the secret of the mysterious box.

This was at first only a faint shadow of a Trouble; but,

every day, it grew more and more substantial, until, before a great while, the cottage of Epimetheus and Pandora was less sunshiny than those of the other children.

"Whence can the box have come?" Pandora continually kept saying to herself and to Epimetheus. "And what in the world can be inside of it?"

"Always talking about this box!" said Epimetheus, at last; for he had grown extremely tired of the subject. "I wish, dear Pandora, you would try to talk of something else. Come, let us go and gather some ripe figs, and eat them under the trees for our supper. And I know a vine that has the sweetest and juiciest grapes you ever tasted."

"Always talking about grapes and figs!" cried Pandora, pettishly.

"Well then," said Epimetheus, who was a very good tempered child, like a multitude of children in those days, "let us run out and have a merry time with our playmates."

"I am tired of merry times, and I don't care if I never have any more!" answered our pettish little Pandora. "And, besides, I never do have any. This ugly box! I am so taken up with thinking about it all the time. I insist upon your telling me what is inside of it."

"As I have already said, fifty times over, I do not know!" replied Epimetheus, getting a little vexed. "How, then, can I tell you what is inside?"

"You might open it," said Pandora, looking sidewise at Epimetheus, "and then we could see for ourselves."

"Pandora, what are you thinking of?" exclaimed Epimetheus.

And his face expressed so much horror at the idea of

looking into a box which had been confided to him on the condition of his never opening it, that Pandora thought it best not to suggest it any more. Still, however, she could not help thinking and talking about the box.

"At least," said she, "you can tell me how it came here."

"It was left at the door," replied Epimetheus, "just before you came, by a person who looked very smiling and intelligent, and who could hardly forbear laughing as he put it down. He was dressed in an odd kind of a cloak, and had on a cap that seemed to be made partly of feathers, so that it looked almost as if it had wings."

"What sort of a staff had he?" asked Pandora.

"Oh, the most curious staff you ever saw!" cried Epimetheus. "It was like two serpents, twisting around a stick, and was carved so naturally that I, at first, thought the serpents were alive."

"I know him," said Pandora, thoughtfully. "Nobody else has such a staff. It was Quicksilver, and he brought me hither, as well as the box. No doubt he intended it for me; and most probably it contains pretty dresses for me to wear, or toys for you and me to play with, or something very nice for both of us to eat!"

"Perhaps so," answered Epimetheus, turning away. "But until Quicksilver comes back and tells us so, we have neither of us any right to lift the lid of the box."

"What a dull boy he is!" muttered Pandora, as Epimetheus left the cottage. "I do wish he had a little more enterprise!"

For the first time since her arrival, Epimetheus had gone out without asking Pandora to accompany him. He

went to gather figs and grapes by himself, or to seek whatever amusement he could find, in other society than his little playfellow's. He was tired to death of hearing about the box, and heartily wished that Quicksilver, or whatever was the messenger's name, had left it at some other child's door, where Pandora would have never set eyes on it. So perseveringly did she babble about this one thing! The box, the box, and nothing but the box! It seemed as if the box were bewitched, and as if the cottage were not big enough to hold it without Pandora's continually stumbling over it and making Epimetheus stumble over it likewise, and bruising all four of their shins.

Well, it was really hard that poor Epimetheus should have a box in his ears from morning till night, especially as the little people of the earth were so unaccustomed to vexations in those happy days, that they knew not how to deal with them. Thus, a small vexation made as much disturbance then, as a far bigger one would do in our times.

After Epimetheus was gone, Pandora stood gazing at the box. She had called it ugly above a hundred times; but, in spite of all that she had said against it, it was positively a very handsome article of furniture, and would have been quite an ornament to any room in which it should be placed. It was made of a beautiful kind of wood, with dark and rich veins spreading over its surface, which was so highly polished that little Pandora could see her face in it.

As the child had no other looking-glass, it is odd that she did not value the box merely on this account.

The edges and corners of the box were carved with

most wonderful skill. Around the margin there were figures of graceful men and women, and the prettiest children ever seen, reclining or sporting amid a profusion of flowers and foliage; and these objects were so exquisitely represented, and were wrought together in such harmony, that flowers, foliage, and human beings seemed to combine into a wreath of mingled beauty. But here and there, peeping forth from behind the carved foliage, Pandora once or twice fancied that she saw a face not so lovely, or something or other that was disagreeable, and which stole the beauty out of all the rest. Nevertheless, on looking more closely, and touching the spot with her finger, she could discover nothing of the kind. Some face that was really beautiful had been made to look ugly by her catching a sidewise glimpse of it.

The most beautiful face of all was done in what is called high relief, in the center of the lid. There was nothing else save the dark, smooth richness of the polished wood, and this one face in the center, with a garland of flowers about its brow. Pandora had looked at this face a great many times, and imagined that the mouth could smile if it liked, or be grave when it chose, the same as any living mouth. The features, indeed, all wore a very lively and rather mischievous expression, which looked almost as if it needs must burst out of the carved lips, and utter itself in words.

Had the mouth spoken, it would probably have been something like this: —

"Do not be afraid, Pandora! What harm can there be in opening the box? Never mind that poor, simple Epimetheus! You are wiser than he, and have ten times as

much spirit. Open the box, and see if you do not find something very pretty!"

The box, I had almost forgotten to say, was fastened; not by a lock, nor by any other such contrivance, but by a very intricate knot of gold cord. There appeared to be no end to this knot, and no beginning. Never was a knot so cunningly twisted, nor with so many ins and outs, which roguishly defied the skillfulest fingers to disentangle them. And yet, by the very difficulty that there was in it, Pandora was the more tempted to examine the knot and see just how it was made. Two or three times, already, she had stooped over the box, and taken the knot between her thumb and forefinger, but without positively trying to undo it.

"I really believe," said she to herself, "that I begin to see how it was done. Nay, perhaps I could tie it up again, after undoing it. There would be no harm in that, surely. Even Epimetheus would not blame me for that. I need not open the box, and should not, of course, without the foolish boy's consent, even if the knot were untied."

It might have been better for Pandora if she had had a little work to do, or anything to employ her mind upon, so as not to be constantly thinking of this one subject. But children led so easy a life, before any troubles came into the world, that they had really a great deal too much leisure. They could not be forever playing at hide and seek among the flower shrubs, or at blindman's buff with garlands over their eyes, or at whatever other games had been found out while mother earth was in her babyhood. When life is all sport, toil is the real play. There was absolutely nothing to do. A little sweeping and dusting

about the cottage, I suppose, and the gathering of fresh flowers (which were only too abundant everywhere) and arranging them in vases, — and poor little Pandora's day's work was over. And then for the rest of the day there was the box.

After all, I am not quite sure that the box was not a blessing to her in its way. It supplied her with such a variety of ideas to think of and to talk about, whenever she had anybody to listen. When she was in good humor, she could admire the bright polish of its sides and the rich border of beautiful faces and foliage that ran all around it. Or, if she chanced to be ill-tempered, she could give it a push, or kick it with her naughty little foot. And many a kick did the box, — but it was a mischievous box, as we shall see, and deserved all it got, — many a kick did it receive. But certain it is, if it had not been for the box, our active-minded little Pandora would not have known half so well how to spend her time as she now did.

For it was really an endless employment to guess what was inside. What could it be, indeed? Just imagine, my little hearers, how busy your wits would be, if there were a great box in the house, which, as you might have reason to suppose, contained something new and pretty for your Christmas or New Year's gifts. Do you think you should be less curious than Pandora? If you were left alone with the box, might you not feel a little tempted to lift the lid? But you would not do it. Oh, fie! No, no! Only, if you thought there were toys in it, it would be so very hard to let slip an opportunity of taking just one peep. I know not whether Pandora expected any toys; for none had yet begun to be made, probably, in

those days, when the world itself was one great plaything for the children that dwelt upon it. But Pandora was convinced that there was something very beautiful and valuable in the box, and therefore she felt just as anxious to take a peep as any of these little girls around me would have felt. And possibly a little more so, but of that I am not quite so certain.

On this particular day, however, which we have been so long talking about, her curiosity grew so much greater than it usually was that at last she approached the box. She was more than half determined to open it, if she could. Ah, naughty Pandora!

First, however, she tried to lift it. It was heavy, quite too heavy for the slender strength of a child like Pandora. She raised one end of the box a few inches from the floor, and let it fall again with a pretty loud thump. A moment afterwards she almost fancied she heard something stir inside the box. She applied her ear as closely as possible, and listened. Positively, there did seem to be a kind of stifled murmur within! Or could it be the beating of her heart? The child could not quite satisfy herself whether she had heard anything or not. But, at all events, her curiosity was stronger than ever.

As she drew back her head, her eyes fell upon the knot of gold cord.

"It must have been a very ingenious person who tied this knot," said Pandora to herself. "But I think I could untie it, nevertheless. I am resolved, at least, to find the two ends of the cord."

So she took the golden knot in her fingers, and pried into its intricacies as sharply as she could. Almost with-

out intending it, or quite knowing what she was about, she was soon busily engaged in attempting to undo it. Meanwhile the bright sunshine came through the open window, as did likewise the merry voices of the children, playing at a distance, and perhaps the voice of Epimetheus among them. Pandora stopped to listen. What a beautiful day it was! Would it not be wiser if she were to let the troublesome knot alone, and think no more about the box, but run and join her little playfellows and be happy?

All this time, however, her fingers were half unconsciously busy with the knot; and happening to glance at the flower-wreathed face on the lid of the enchanted box, she seemed to perceive it slyly grinning at her.

"That face looks very mischievous," thought Pandora. "I wonder whether it smiles because I am doing wrong. I have the greatest mind in the world to run away."

But just then by the merest accident, she gave the knot a kind of twist, which produced a wonderful result. The gold cord untwined itself, as if by magic, and left the box without a fastening.

"This is the strangest thing I ever knew!" said Pandora. "What will Epimetheus say? And how can I possibly tie it up again?"

She made one or two attempts to restore the knot, but soon found it quite beyond her skill. It had disentangled itself so suddenly that she could not in the least remember how the strings had been doubled into one another; and when she tried to recollect the shape and appearance of the knot, it seemed to have gone entirely out of her mind. Nothing was to be done, therefore, but to let the box remain as it was until Epimetheus should come in.

"But," said Pandora, "when he finds the knot untied, he will know that I have done it. How shall I make him believe that I have not looked into the box?"

And then the thought came into her naughty little heart, that, since she would be suspected of having looked into the box, she might just as well do so at once. Oh, very naughty and very foolish Pandora! You should have thought only of doing what was right, and of leaving undone what was wrong, and not of what your playfellow, Epimetheus, would have said or believed. And so perhaps she might, if the enchanted face on the lid of the box had not looked so bewitchingly persuasive at her, and if she had not seemed to hear, more distinctly than before, the murmur of small voices within. She could not tell whether it was fancy or not; but there was quite a tumult of whispers in her ear — or else it was her curiosity that whispered, — let us out, dear Pandora; pray let us out! We will be such nice pretty playfellows for you! Only, let us out!"

"What can it be?" thought Pandora. "Is there something alive in the box? Well, yes! I am resolved to take just one peep! Only one peep! And then the lid shall be shut down as safely as ever. There cannot possibly be any harm in just one little peep!"

But it is now time to see what Epimetheus was doing.

This was the first time, since his little playmate had come to dwell with him, that he had attempted to enjoy any pleasure in which she did not partake. But nothing went right; nor was he nearly so happy as on other days. He could not find a sweet grape, or a ripe fig (if Epimetheus had a fault, it was a little too much fondness

for figs;) or, if ripe at all, they were over ripe, and so sweet as to be cloying. There was no mirth in his heart, such as usually made his voice gush out of its own accord, and swell the merriment of his companions. In short, he grew so uneasy and discontented, that the other children could not imagine what was the matter with Epimetheus. Neither did he himself know what ailed him, any better than they did. For you must recollect that, at the time we are speaking of, it was everybody's nature, and constant habit, to be happy. The world had not yet learned to be otherwise. Not a single soul or body, since these children were first sent to enjoy themselves on the beautiful earth, had ever been sick or out of sorts.

At length, discovering that, somehow or other, he put a stop to all the play, Epimetheus judged it best to go back to Pandora, who was in a humor better suited to his own. But, with the hope of giving her pleasure, he gathered some flowers, and made them into a wreath, which he meant to put upon her head. The flowers were very lovely,— roses and lilies, and orange blossoms, and a great many more, which left a trail of fragrance behind, as Epimetheus carried them along; and the wreath was put together with as much skill as could reasonably be expected of a boy. The fingers of little girls, it has always appeared to me, are the fittest to twine flower wreaths; but boys could do it, in those days, rather better than they can now.

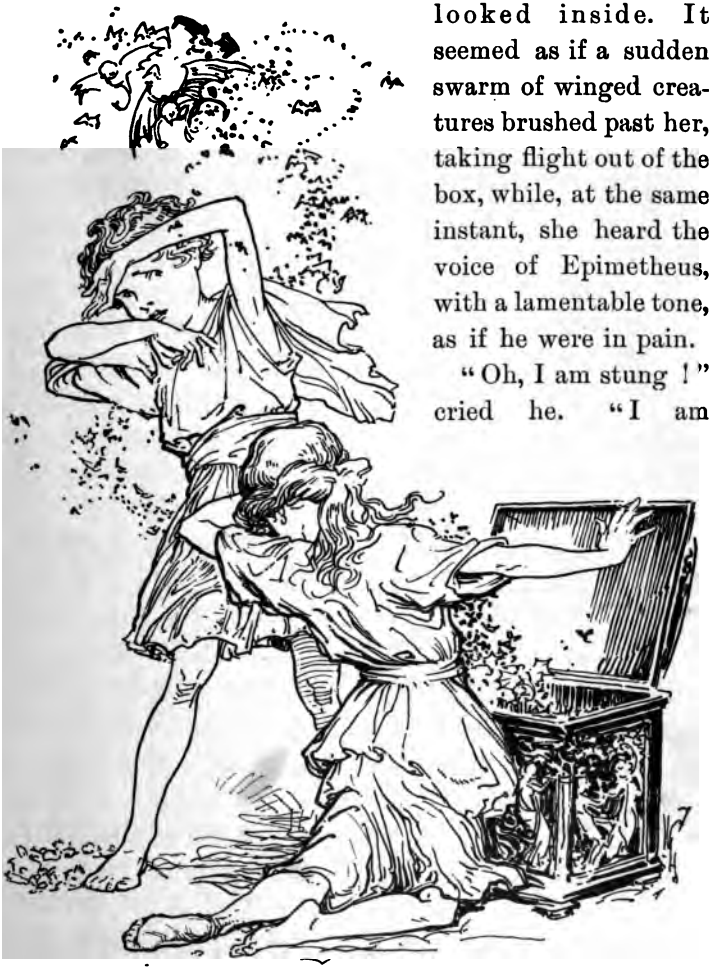
And here I must mention that a great black cloud had been gathering in the sky for some time past, although it had not yet overspread the sun. But, just as Epimetheus reached the cottage door, this cloud began to intercept

the sunshine, and thus to make a sudden and sad obscurity.

He entered softly; for he meant, if possible, to steal behind Pandora, and fling the wreath of flowers over her head, before she should be aware of his approach. But, as it happened, there was no need of his treading so very lightly. He might have trod as heavily as he pleased, — as heavily as a grown man, — as heavily, I was going to say, as an elephant, — without much probability of Pandora's hearing his footsteps. She was too intent upon her purpose. At the moment of his entering the cottage, the naughty child had put her hand to the lid, and was on the point of opening the mysterious box. Epimetheus beheld her. If he had cried out, Pandora would have probably withdrawn her hand, and the fatal mystery of the box might have never been known.

But Epimetheus himself, although he said very little about it, had his own share of curiosity to know what was inside. Perceiving that Pandora was resolved to find out the secret, he determined that his playfellow should not be the only wise person in the cottage. And if there were anything pretty or valuable in the box, he meant to take half of it to himself. Thus, after all his sage speeches to Pandora about restraining her curiosity, Epimetheus turned out to be quite as foolish, and nearly as much in fault as she. So, whenever we blame Pandora for what happened, we must not forget to shake our heads at Epimetheus likewise.

As Pandora raised the lid, the cottage grew very dark and dismal; for the black cloud had now swept quite over the sun, and seemed to have buried it alive. There had,

for a little while past, been a low growling and muttering, which all at once broke into a heavy peal of thunder. But Pandora, heeding nothing of all this, lifted the lid nearly upright, and looked inside. It seemed as if a sudden swarm of winged creatures brushed past her, taking flight out of the box, while, at the same instant, she heard the voice of Epimetheus, with a lamentable tone, as if he were in pain.

"Oh, I am stung!" cried he. "I am

stung! Naughty Pandora! Why have you opened this wicked box?"

Pandora let fall the lid, and, starting up, looked about her to see what had befallen Epimetheus. The thundercloud had so darkened the room that she could not very clearly discern what was in it; but she heard a disagreeable buzzing, as if a great many huge flies or gigantic mosquitoes, or those insects we call dorbugs and pinching dogs, were darting about. And, as her eyes grew more accustomed to the imperfect light, she saw a crowd of ugly little shapes, with bats' wings, looking abominably spiteful, and armed with terribly long stings in their tails. It was one of these that had stung Epimetheus. Nor was it a great while before Pandora herself began to scream, in no less pain and affright than her playfellow, and making a vast deal more hubbub about it. An odious little monster had settled on her forehead, and would have stung her, I know not how deeply, if Epimetheus had not run and brushed it away.

Now, if you wish to know what these ugly things might be which had made their escape out of the box, I must tell you they were the whole family of earthly Troubles. There were Evil Passions; there were a great many species of Cares; there were more than a hundred and fifty Sorrows; there were Diseases, in a vast number of miserable and painful shapes; there were more kinds of Naughtiness than it would be of any use to talk about. In short, everything that has since afflicted the souls and bodies of mankind had been shut up in the mysterious box, and given to Epimetheus and Pandora to keep safely, in order that the happy children of the world might never be mo-

lested by them. Had they been faithful to their trust, all would have gone well; no grown person would ever have been sad, nor any child have had cause to shed a single tear from that hour until this moment.

But — and you may see by this how a wrong act of any one mortal is a calamity to the whole world — by Pandora's lifting the lid of that miserable box, and by the fault of Epimetheus, too, in not preventing her, these Troubles have obtained a foothold among us, and do not seem very likely to be driven away in a hurry. For it is impossible, as you will easily guess, that the two children should keep the ugly swarm in the cottage. On the contrary, the first thing they did was to fling open the doors and windows, in hopes of getting rid of them; and, sure enough, away flew the winged Troubles all abroad, and so pestered and tormented the small people, everywhere about, that none of them so much as smiled for many days afterward. And, what was very singular, all the flowers and dewy blossoms on earth, not one of which had hitherto faded, now began to droop and shed their leaves, after a day or two. The children, moreover, who before seemed immortal in their childhood, now grew older, day by day, and came soon to be youths and maidens and men and women by and by; and aged people, before they dreamed of such a thing.

Meanwhile, the naughty Pandora, and hardly less naughty Epimetheus, remained in their cottage. Both of them had been grievously stung, and were in a good deal of pain, which seemed the more intolerable to them because it was the very first pain that had ever been felt since the world began. Of course, they were entirely unaccustomed to it, and could have no idea what it meant.

Besides all this, they were in exceedingly bad humor, both with themselves and with one another. In order to indulge it to the utmost, Epimetheus sat down sullenly in a corner with his back towards Pandora; while Pandora flung herself upon the floor, and rested her head on the abominable box, sobbing as if her heart would break.

Suddenly there was a gentle little tap on the inside of the lid.

"What can that be?" cried Pandora, lifting her head.

But either Epimetheus had not heard the tap, or was too much out of humor to notice it. At any rate he made no answer.

"You are very unkind," said Pandora, sobbing anew, "not to speak to me!"

Again the tap. It sounded like the tiny knuckles of a fairy's hand, knocking lightly and playfully on the inside of the box.

"Who are you?" asked Pandora, with a little of her former curiosity; "who are you inside of this naughty box?"

A sweet little voice spoke from within, "Only lift the lid, and you shall see."

"No, no," answered Pandora, again beginning to sob; "I have had enough of lifting the lid. You are inside of the box, naughty creature, and there you shall stay! There are plenty of your ugly brothers and sisters already flying about the world. You need never think I shall ever be so foolish as to let you out!"

She looked toward Epimetheus, as she spoke, perhaps expecting that he would commend her for her wisdom. But the sullen boy only muttered that she was wise a little too late.

"Ah," said the sweet little voice again, "you had much better let me out. I am not like those naughty creatures that have stings in their tails. They are no brothers and sisters of mine, as you would see at once, if you were only to get a glimpse of me. Come, come, my pretty Pandora! I am sure you will let me out!"

And, indeed, there was a kind of cheerful witchery in the tone, that made it almost impossible to refuse anything which this little voice asked. Pandora's heart had insensibly grown lighter at every word that came from within the box. Epimetheus, too, though still in the corner, had turned half around, and seemed to be in rather better spirits than before.

"My dear Epimetheus," cried Pandora, "have you heard this little voice?"

"Yes, to be sure I have," answered he, but in no very good humor as yet; "and what of it?"

"Shall I lift the lid again?" asked Pandora.

"Just as you please," said Epimetheus; "you have done so much mischief already, that perhaps you may as well do a little more. One other Trouble, in such a swarm as you have set adrift about the world, can make no very great difference."

"You might speak a little more kindly!" murmured Pandora, wiping her eyes.

"Ah, naughty boy!" cried the little voice within the box, in an arch and laughing tone. "He knows he is longing to see me. Come, my dear Pandora, lift up the lid. I am in a great hurry to comfort you. Only let me have some fresh air, and you shall soon see that matters are not quite so dismal as you think them."

"Epimetheus," exclaimed Pandora, "come what may, I am resolved to open the box!"

"And as the lid seems very heavy, I will help you," cried Epimetheus, running across the room.

So, with one consent, the two children again lifted the lid. Out flew a sunny and smiling little personage, and hovered about the room, throwing a light wherever she went. Have you never made the sunshine dance into dark corners, by reflecting it from a bit of looking-glass? Well, so looked the winged cheerfulness of this fairylike stranger, amid the gloom of the cottage. She flew to

Epimetheus, and laid the least touch of her finger on the inflamed spot where the Trouble had stung him, and immediately the anguish of it was gone. Then she kissed Pandora on the forehead, and her hurt was cured likewise.

After performing these good offices, the bright stranger fluttered sportively over the children's heads, and looked so sweetly at them, that they both began to think it not so very much amiss to have opened the box, since, otherwise, their cheery guest must have been kept a prisoner among those naughty imps with stings in their tails.

"Pray, who are you, beautiful creature?" inquired Pandora.

"I am to be called Hope!" answered the sunshiny figure. "And because I am such a cheery little body, I was packed into the box, to make amends to the human race for that swarm of ugly Troubles, which was destined to be let loose among them. Never fear! We shall do pretty well in spite of them all."

"Your wings are colored like the rainbow!" exclaimed Pandora. "How very beautiful!"

"Yes, they are like the rainbow," said Hope, "because glad as my nature is, I am partly made of tears as well as of smiles."

"And you will stay with us," asked Epimetheus, "forever and ever?"

"As long as you need me," said Hope, with her pleasant smile, — "and that will be as long as you live in the world, — I promise never to desert you. There may come times and seasons, now and then, when you will think I have utterly vanished. But again, and again, and again, when

perhaps you least dream of it, you shall see the glimmer of my wings on the ceiling of your cottage. Yes, my dear children, and I know something very good and beautiful that is to be given you hereafter!"

"Oh, tell us," they exclaimed, — "tell us what it is!"

"Do not ask me," replied Hope, putting her finger on her rosy mouth. "But do not despair, even if it should never happen while you live on this earth. Trust in my promise, for it is true."

And so they did; and not only they, but so has everybody trusted Hope, that has since been alive. And to tell you the truth, I cannot help being glad (though to be sure it was an uncommonly naughty thing for her to do), but I cannot help being glad that our foolish Pandora peeped into the box. No doubt — no doubt — the Troubles are still flying about the world, and have increased in multitude, rather than lessened, and are a very ugly set of imps, and carry most venomous stings in their tails. I have felt them already, and expect to feel them more, as I grow older. But then that lovely and lightsome figure of Hope! What in the world could we do without her? Hope spiritualizes the earth; Hope makes it always new; and, even in the earth's best and brightest aspect, Hope shows it to be only the shadow of an infinite bliss hereafter.

THE MIRACULOUS PITCHER

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

ONE evening, in times long ago, old Philemon and his old wife, Baucis, sat at their cottage door, enjoying

the calm and beautiful sunset. They had already eaten their frugal supper, and intended now to spend a quiet hour or two before bedtime. So they talked together about their garden, and their cow, and their bees, and their grapevine, which clambered over the cottage wall, and on which the grapes were beginning to turn purple. But the rude shouts of children, and the fierce barking of dogs, in the village near at hand, grew louder and louder, until at last it was hardly possible for Baucis and Philemon to hear each other speak.

"Ah, wife," cried Philemon, "I fear some poor traveler is seeking hospitality among our neighbors yonder, and, instead of giving him food and lodging, they have set their dogs at him, as their custom is!"

"Well-a-day!" answered old Baucis, "I do wish our neighbors felt a little more kindness for their fellow-creatures. And only to think of bringing up their children in this naughty way, and patting them on the head when they fling stones at strangers!"

"Those children will never come to any good," said Philemon, shaking his white head. "To tell you the truth, wife, I should not wonder if some terrible thing were to happen to all the people in the village, unless they mend their manners. But as for you and me, as long as Providence affords us a crust of bread, let us be ready to give half to any poor, homeless stranger that may come along and need it."

"That's right, husband!" said Baucis. "So we will!"

These old folks, you must know, were quite poor, and had to work pretty hard for a living. Old Philemon toiled diligently in his garden, while Baucis was always

busy with her distaff, or making a little butter and cheese with their cow's milk, or doing one thing or another about the cottage. Their food was seldom anything but bread, milk, and vegetables, with sometimes a portion of honey from their beehive, and now and then a bunch of grapes that had ripened against the cottage wall. But they were two of the kindest old people in the world, and would have cheerfully gone without their dinners any day rather than refuse a slice of their brown loaf, a cup of new milk, and a spoonful of honey to the weary traveler who might pause before their door. They felt as if such guests had a sort of holiness, and that they ought, therefore, to treat them better and more bountifully than their own selves.

Their cottage stood on a rising ground, at some short distance from the village, which lay in a hollow valley that was about a half a mile in breadth. This valley, in past ages, when the world was new, had probably been the bed of a lake. There fishes had glided to and fro in the depths, and water weeds had grown along the margin, and trees and hills had seen their reflected images in the broad and peaceful mirror. But as the waters subsided, men had cultivated the soil and built houses on it, so that it was now a fertile spot and bore no traces of the ancient lake, except a very small brook, which meandered through the midst of the village and supplied the inhabitants with water. The valley had been dry land so long, that oaks had sprung up, and grown great and high, and perished with old age, and been succeeded by others as tall and stately as the first. Never was there a prettier or more fruitful valley. The very sight of the plenty around

them should have made the inhabitants kind and gentle, and ready to show their gratitude to Providence by doing good to their fellow-creatures.

But, we are sorry to say, the people of this lovely village were not worthy to dwell in a spot on which Heaven had smiled so beneficently. They were a very selfish and hard-hearted people, and had no pity for the poor nor sympathy with the homeless. They would only have laughed, had anybody told them that human beings owe a debt of love to one another, because there is no other method of paying the debt of love and care which all of us owe to Providence. You will hardly believe what I am going to tell you. These naughty people taught their children to be no better than themselves, and used to clap their hands, by way of encouragement, when they saw the little boys and girls run after some poor stranger, shouting at his heels and pelting him with stones. They kept large and fierce dogs, and whenever a traveler ventured to show himself in the village street, this pack of disagreeable curs scampered to meet him, barking, snarling, and showing their teeth. Then they would seize him by his leg or by his clothes, just as it happened; and if he were ragged when he came, he was generally a pitiable object before he had time to run away. This was a very terrible thing to poor travelers, as you may suppose, especially when they chanced to be sick, or feeble, or lame, or old. Such persons (if they once knew how badly these unkind people and their unkind children and curs were in the habit of behaving) would go miles out of their way rather than try to pass through the village again.

What made the matter seem worse, if possible, was that

when rich persons came in their chariots, or riding on beautiful horses, with their servants in rich liveries attending on them, nobody could be more civil and obsequious than the inhabitants of the village. They would take off their hats, and make the humblest bows you ever saw. If the children were rude, they were pretty certain to get their ears boxed; and as for the dogs, if a single cur in the pack presumed to yelp, his master instantly beat him with a club, and tied him up without any supper. This would have been all very well, only it proved that the villagers cared much about the money that a stranger had in his pocket, and nothing whatever for the human soul, which lives equally in the beggar and the prince.

So now you can understand why old Philemon spoke so sorrowfully when he heard the shouts of the children and the barking of the dogs, at the farther extremity of the village street. There was a confused din, which lasted a good while and seemed to pass quite through the breadth of the valley.

"I never heard the dogs so loud," observed the good old man.

"Nor the children so rude," answered his good old wife.

They sat shaking their heads to one another, while the noise came nearer and nearer; until, at the foot of the little eminence on which their cottage stood, they saw two travelers approaching on foot. Close behind them came the fierce dogs, snarling at their very heels. A little farther off, ran a crowd of children, who set up shrill cries and flung stones at the two strangers with all their might. Once or twice, the younger of the two men

(he was a slender and very active figure), turned about and drove back the dogs with a staff which he carried in his hand. His companion, who was a very tall person, walked calmly along, as if disdaining to notice either the naughty children or the pack of curs, whose manners the children seemed to imitate.

Both of the travelers were very humbly clad, and looked as if they might not have money enough in their pockets to pay for a night's lodging. And this, I am afraid, was the reason why the villagers had allowed their children and dogs to treat them so rudely.

"Come, wife," said Philemon to Baucis, "let us go and meet these poor people. No doubt they feel almost too heavy-hearted to climb the hill."

"Go you and meet them," answered Baucis, "while I make haste within doors and see whether we can get them anything for supper. A comfortable bowl of bread and milk would do wonders towards raising their spirits."

Accordingly, she hastened into the cottage. Philemon, on his part, went forward and extended his hand with so hospitable an aspect that there was no need of saying what, nevertheless, he did say, in the heartiest tone imaginable, — "Welcome, strangers! Welcome!"

"Thank you!" replied the younger of the two, in a lively kind of way, notwithstanding his weariness and trouble. "This is quite another greeting than we have met with in yonder village. Pray, why do you live in such a bad neighborhood?"

"Ah!" observed old Philemon, with a quiet and benign smile, "Providence puts me here, I hope, among other reasons, in order that I may make you what amends I can for the inhospitality of my neighbors."

"Well said, old father!" cried the traveler, laughing; "and, if the truth must be told, my companion and myself need some amends. Those children (the little rascals!) have bespattered us finely with their mud balls; and one of the curs has torn my cloak, which was ragged enough already. But I took him across the muzzle with my staff, and I think you may have heard him yelp, even thus far off."

Philemon was glad to see him in such good spirits; nor, indeed, would you have fancied, by the traveler's look and manner, that he was weary with a long day's journey, besides being disheartened by rough treatment at the end of it. He was dressed in rather an odd way, with a sort of cap on his head, the brim of which stuck out over both ears. Though it was a summer evening he wore a cloak, which he kept wrapped closely about him, perhaps because his undergarments were shabby. Philemon

perceived, too, that he had on a singular pair of shoes; but, as it was now growing dusk, and as the old man's eyesight was none of the sharpest, he could not precisely tell in what the strangeness consisted. One thing, certainly, seemed queer. The traveler was so wonderfully light and active that it appeared as if his feet sometimes rose from the ground of their own accord, or could only be kept down by an effort.

"I used to be light-footed in my youth," said Philemon to the traveler. "But I always found my feet grow heavier toward nightfall."

"There is nothing like a good staff to help one along," answered the stranger; "and I happen to have an excellent one, as you see."

This staff, in fact, was the oddest-looking staff that Philemon had ever beheld. It was made of olivewood, and had something like a little pair of wings near the top. Two snakes, carved in wood, were represented as twining themselves about the staff, and were so very skillfully executed that old Philemon (whose eyes, you know, were getting rather dim), almost thought them alive, and that he could see them wriggling and twisting.

"A curious piece of work, sure enough!" said he. "A staff with wings! It would be an excellent kind of stick for a little boy to ride astride of."

By this time, Philemon and his two guests had reached the cottage door. "Friends," said the old man, "sit down and rest yourselves here on this bench. My good wife Baucis has gone to see what you can have for supper. We are poor folks; but you shall be welcome to whatever we have in the cupboard."

The younger stranger threw himself carelessly on the bench, letting his staff fall as he did so. And here happened something rather marvelous, though trifling enough, too. The staff seemed to get up from the ground of its own accord, and, spreading its little pair of wings, it half hopped, half flew, and leaned itself against the wall of the cottage. There it stood quite still, except that the snakes continued to wriggle. But in my private opinion, old Philemon's eyesight had been playing him tricks again.

Before he could ask any questions, the elder stranger drew his attention from the wonderful staff by speaking to him.

"Was there not," asked the stranger, in a remarkably deep tone of voice, "a lake, in very ancient times, covering the spot where now stands yonder village?"

"Not in my day, friend," answered Philemon; "and yet I am an old man, as you see. There were always the fields and meadows, just as they are now, and the old trees, and the little stream murmuring through the midst of the valley. My father, nor his father before him, ever saw it otherwise, so far as I know; and doubtless it will still be the same, when old Philemon shall be gone and forgotten."

"That is more than can safely be foretold," observed the stranger; and there was something very stern in his deep voice. He shook his head, too, so that his dark and heavy curls were shaken with the movement. "Since the inhabitants of yonder village have forgotten the affections and sympathies of their nature, it were better that the lake should be rippling over their dwellings again!"

The traveler looked so stern, that Philemon was really

him. "It is a very odd name! And your companion there? Has he as strange a one?"

"You must ask the thunder to tell it to you!" replied Quicksilver, putting on a mysterious look. "No other voice is loud enough."

This remark, whether it were serious or in jest, might have caused Philemon to conceive a very great awe of the elder stranger, if, on venturing to gaze at him, he had not beheld so much beneficence in his visage. But, undoubtedly, here was the grandest figure that ever sat so humbly beside a cottage door. When the stranger conversed, it was with gravity, and in such a way that Philemon felt irresistibly moved to tell him everything which he had most at heart. This is always the feeling that people have when they meet any one wise enough to comprehend all their good and evil, and to despise not a tittle of it.

But Philemon, simple and kind-hearted old man that he was, had not many secrets to disclose. He talked, however, quite garrulously, about the events of his past life, in the whole course of which he had never been a score of miles from this very spot. His wife Baucis and himself had dwelt in the cottage from their youth upward, earning their bread by honest labor, always poor, but still contented. He told what excellent butter and cheese Baucis made, and how nice were the vegetables which he raised in his garden. He said, too, that because they loved each other so very much, it was the wish of both that death might not separate them, but they should die, as they had lived, together.

As the stranger listened, a smile beamed over his countenance, and made its expression as sweet as it was grand.

"You are a good old man," said he to Philemon, "and you have a good old wife to be your helpmeet. It is fit that your wish should be granted."

And it seemed to Philemon, just then, as if the sunset clouds threw up a bright flash from the west, and kindled a sudden light in the sky.

Baucis had now got supper ready, and, coming to the door, began to make apologies for the poor fare which she was forced to set before her guests.

"Had we known you were coming," said she, "my good man and myself would have gone without a morsel, rather than you should lack a better supper. But I took the most part of to-day's milk to make a cheese; and our last loaf is already half eaten. Ah me! I never feel the sorrow of being poor, save when a poor traveler knocks at our door."

"All will be very well; do not trouble yourself, my good dame," replied the elder stranger, kindly. "An honest, hearty welcome to a guest works miracles with the fare and is capable of turning the coarsest food to nectar and ambrosia."

"A welcome you shall have," cried Baucis, "and likewise a little honey that we happen to have left, and a bunch of purple grapes besides."

"Why, Mother Baucis, it is a feast!" exclaimed Quicksilver, laughing, "an absolute feast! And you shall see how bravely I will play my part at it! I think I never felt hungrier in my life."

"Mercy on us!" whispered Baucis to her husband. "If the young man has such a terrible appetite, I am afraid there will not be half enough supper!"

They all went into the cottage.

And now, my little auditors, I shall tell you something that will make you open your eyes very wide. It is really one of the oddest circumstances in the whole story. Quicksilver's staff, you recollect, had set itself up against the wall of the cottage. Well; when the master entered the door, leaving this wonderful staff behind, what should it do but immediately spread its little wings, and go hopping and fluttering up the doorsteps? Tap, tap, went the staff, on the kitchen floor; nor did it rest until it had stood itself on end, with the greatest gravity and decorum, beside Quicksilver's chair. Old Philemon, however, as well as his wife, was so taken up in attending to their guests, that no notice was given to what the staff had been about.

As Baucis had said, there was but a scanty supper for two hungry travelers. In the middle of the table was the remnant of a brown loaf, with a piece of cheese on one side of it, and a dish of honeycomb on the other. There was a pretty good bunch of grapes for each of the guests. A moderate-sized earthen pitcher, nearly full of milk, stood at a corner of the board; and when Baucis had filled two bowls, and set them before the strangers, only a little milk remained in the bottom of the pitcher. Alas! It is a very sad business, when a bountiful heart finds itself pinched and squeezed among narrow circumstances. Poor Baucis kept wishing that she might starve for a week or two to come, if it were possible, by so doing, to provide these hungry folks a more plentiful supper.

And, since the supper was so exceedingly small, she could not help wishing that their appetites had not been

quite so large. Why, at their very first sitting down, the travelers both drank off all the milk in their two bowls at a draft.

"A little more milk, kind Mother Baucis, if you please," said Quicksilver. "The day has been hot, and I am very much athirst."

"Now, my dear people," answered Baucis, in great confusion, "I am so sorry and ashamed! But the truth is, there is hardly a drop more milk in the pitcher. O husband! Husband! Why didn't we go without our supper?"

"Why, it appears to me," cried Quicksilver, starting up from the table and taking the pitcher by the handle, "it really appears to me that matters are not quite so bad as you represent them. Here is certainly more milk in the pitcher."

So saying, and to the vast astonishment of Baucis, he proceeded to fill, not only his own bowl, but his companion's likewise, from the pitcher, that was supposed to be almost empty. The good woman could scarcely believe her eyes. She had certainly poured out nearly all the milk, and had peeped in afterwards, and had seen the bottom of the pitcher, as she set it down upon the table.

"But I am old," thought Baucis to herself, "and apt to be forgetful. I suppose I must have made a mistake. At all events, the pitcher cannot help being empty now, after filling the bowls twice over."

"What excellent milk!" observed Quicksilver, after quaffing the contents of the second bowl. "Excuse me, my kind hostess, but I must really ask you for a little more."

Now Baucis had seen, as distinctly as she could see anything, that Quicksilver had turned the pitcher upside down, and consequently had poured out every drop of milk in filling the last bowl. Of course there could not possibly be any left. However, in order to let him know precisely how the case was, she lifted the pitcher, and made a gesture as if pouring milk into Quicksilver's bowl, but without the remotest idea that any milk would stream forth. What was her surprise, therefore, when such an abundant cascade fell bubbling into the bowl, that it was immediately filled to the brim, and overflowed upon the table! The two snakes that were twisted about Quick-

silver's staff (but neither Baucis nor Philemon happened to observe this circumstance) stretched out their heads, and began to lap up the spilled milk.

And then what a delicious fragrance the milk had! It seemed as if Philemon's only cow must have pastured, that day, on the richest herbage that could be found anywhere in the world. I only wish that each of you, my beloved little souls, could have a bowl of such nice milk, at supper time.

"And now a slice of your brown loaf, Mother Baucis," said Quicksilver, "and a little of that honey!"

Baucis cut him a slice accordingly; and though the loaf, when she and her husband ate of it, had been rather too dry and crusty to be palatable, it was now as light and moist as if but a few hours out of the oven. Tasting a crumb, which had fallen on the table, she found it more delicious than bread ever was before, and could hardly believe that it was a loaf of her own kneading and baking. Yet, what other loaf could it possibly be?

But, oh, the honey! I may just as well let it alone, without trying to describe how exquisitely it smelled and looked. Its color was that of the purest and most transparent gold; and it had the odor of a thousand flowers, but of such flowers as never grew in an earthly garden, and to seek which the bees must have flown high above the clouds. The wonder is, that, after alighting on a flower bed of so delicious fragrance and immortal bloom, they should have been content to fly down again to their hive in Philemon's garden. Never was such honey tasted, seen, or smelled. The perfume floated around the kitchen, and made it so delightful, that had you closed your eyes, you would have instantly forgotten the low ceiling and smoky walls, and have fancied yourself in an arbor, with celestial honeysuckles creeping over it.

Although good Mother Baucis was a simple old dame, she could but think that there was something rather out of the common way in all that had been going on. So, after helping the guests to bread and honey, and laying a bunch of grapes by each of their plates, she sat down by Philemon, and told him in a whisper what she had seen.

"Did you ever hear the like?" asked she.

"No, I never did," answered Philemon, with a smile. "And I rather think, my dear old wife, you must have been walking about in a sort of dream. If I had poured out the milk, I should have seen through the business at once. There happened to be a little more in the pitcher than you thought — that is all."

"Ah, husband!" said Baucis, "say what you will, these are very uncommon people."

"Well, well," replied Philemon, still smiling, "perhaps they are. They certainly do look as if they had seen better days, and I am heartily glad to see them making so comfortable a supper."

Each of the guests had now taken his bunch of grapes upon his plate. Baucis (who rubbed her eyes, in order to see more clearly) was of the opinion that the clusters had grown larger and richer, and that each separate grape seemed to be on the point of bursting with ripe juice. It was entirely a mystery to her how such grapes could ever have been produced from the stunted old vine that climbed against the cottage wall.

"Very admirable grapes these!" observed Quicksilver, as he swallowed one after another, without apparently diminishing his cluster. "Pray, my good host, whence did you gather them?"

"From my own vine," answered Philemon. "You may see one of its branches twisting across the window yonder. But wife and I never thought the grapes very fine ones."

"I never tasted better," said the guests. "Another cup of this delicious milk, if you please, and I shall then have supped better than a prince."

This time old Philemon bestirred himself, and took up the pitcher, for he was curious to discover whether there was any reality in the marvels which Baucis had whispered to him. He knew that his good old wife was incapable of falsehood, and that she was seldom mistaken in what she supposed to be true; but this was so very singular a case that he wanted to see into it with his own eyes. On taking up the pitcher, therefore, he slyly peeped into it, and was fully satisfied that it contained not so much as a single drop. All at once, however, he beheld a little white fountain, which gushed up from the bottom of the pitcher, and speedily filled it to the brim with foaming and deliciously fragrant milk. It was lucky that Philemon, in his surprise, did not drop the miraculous pitcher from his hand.

"Who are ye, wonder-working strangers?" cried he, even more bewildered than his wife had been.

"Your guests, my good Philemon, and your friends," replied the elder traveler, in his mild, deep voice, that had something at once sweet and awe inspiring in it. "Give me likewise a cup of the milk; and may your pitcher never be empty for kind Baucis and yourself, any more than for the needy wayfarer!"

The supper now being over, the strangers requested to be shown to their place of repose. The old people would

gladly have talked to them a little longer, and have expressed the wonder which they felt, and their delight at finding the poor and meager supper prove so much better and more abundant than they had hoped. But the elder traveler had inspired them with such reverence that they dared not ask him any questions. And when Philemon drew Quicksilver aside, and inquired how under the sun a fountain of milk could have got into an old earthen pitcher, this latter personage pointed to his staff.

"There is the whole mystery of the affair," quoth Quicksilver; "and if you can make it out, I'll thank you to let me know. I can't tell what to make of my staff. It is always playing such odd tricks as this; sometimes getting me a supper, and quite as often stealing it away. If I had any faith in such nonsense, I should say the stick was bewitched!"

He said no more, but looked so slyly in their faces that they rather fancied he was laughing at them. The magic staff went hopping at his heels, as Quicksilver quitted the room. When left alone, the good old couple spent some little time in conversation about the events of the evening, and then lay down on the floor and fell fast asleep. They had given up their sleeping room to the guests, and had no other bed for themselves, save these planks, which I wish had been as soft as their own hearts.

The old man and his wife were stirring betimes in the morning, and the strangers likewise arose with the sun, and made their preparations to depart. Philemon hospitably entreated them to remain a little longer, until Baucis could milk the cow, and bake a cake upon the hearth, and, perhaps, find them a few fresh eggs for break-

fast. The guests, however, seemed to think it better to accomplish a good part of their journey before the heat of the day should come on. They, therefore, persisted in setting out immediately, but asked Philemon and Baucis to walk forth with them a short distance, and show them the road which they were to take.

So they all four issued from the cottage, chatting together like old friends. It was very remarkable, indeed, how familiar the old people insensibly grew with the elder traveler, and how their good and simple spirits melted into his, even as two drops of water would melt into the illimitable ocean. And as for Quicksilver, with his keen, quick, laughing wits, he appeared to discover every little thought that but peeped into their minds, before they suspected it themselves. They sometimes wished, it is true, that he had not been quite so quick-witted, and also, that he would fling away his staff, which looked so mysteriously mischievous with the snakes always writhing about it. But then, again, Quicksilver showed himself so very good-humored that they would have been rejoiced to keep him in their cottage, staff, snakes, and all, every day, and the whole day long.

"Ah me! Well-a-day!" exclaimed Philemon, when they had walked a little way from their door. "If our neighbors only knew what a blessed thing it is to show hospitality to strangers, they would tie up all their dogs, and never allow their children to fling another stone."

"It is a sin and shame for them to behave so — that it is!" cried good old Baucis, vehemently; "and I mean to go this very day, and tell some of them what naughty people they are."

"I fear," remarked Quicksilver, slyly smiling, "that you will find none of them at home."

The elder traveler's brow just then assumed such a grave, stern, and awful grandeur, yet serene withal, that neither Baucis nor Philemon dared to speak a word. They gazed reverently into his face, as if they had been gazing at the sky.

"When men do not feel towards the humblest stranger as if he were a brother," said the traveler, in tones so deep that they sounded like those of an organ, "they are unworthy to exist on earth, which was created as the abode of a great human brotherhood!"

"And, by the bye, my dear old people," cried Quicksilver, with the liveliest look of fun and mischief in his eyes, "where is this same village that you talk about? On which side of us does it lie? Methinks I do not see it hereabouts."

Philemon and his wife turned toward the valley, where at sunset, only the day before, they had seen the meadows, the houses, the gardens, the clumps of trees, the wide green-margined street, with children playing in it, and all the tokens of business, enjoyment, and prosperity. But what was their astonishment! There was no longer any appearance of a village! Even the fertile vale, in the hollow of which it lay, had ceased to have an existence. In its stead, they beheld the broad, blue surface of a lake, which filled the great basin of the valley from brim to brim, and reflected the surrounding hills in its bosom with as tranquil an image as if it had been there ever since the creation of the world. For an instant the lake remained perfectly smooth. Then a little breeze sprang

up, and caused the water to dance, glitter, and sparkle in the early sunbeams, and to dash with a pleasant rippling murmur against the hither shore.

The lake seemed so strangely familiar that the old people were greatly perplexed, and felt as if they could only have been dreaming about a village having lain there. But the next moment they remembered the vanished dwellings, and the faces and characters of the inhabitants, far too distinctly for a dream. The village had been there yesterday, and now was gone!

"Alas!" cried these kind-hearted old people, "what has become of our poor neighbors?"

"They exist no longer as men and women," said the elder traveler, in his grand and deep voice, while a roll of thunder seemed to echo it at a distance. "There was neither use nor beauty in such a life as theirs; for they never softened or sweetened the hard lot of mortality by the exercise of kindly affections between man and man. They retained no image of the better life in their bosoms; therefore the lake that was of old has spread itself forth again, to reflect the sky!"

"And as for those foolish people," said Quicksilver, with his mischievous smile, "they are all transformed to fishes. There needed but little change, for they were already a scaly set of rascals, and the coldest-blooded beings in existence. So, kind Mother Baucis, whenever you or your husband have an appetite for a dish of broiled trout, he can throw in a line, and pull out half a dozen of your old neighbors!"

"Ah," cried Baucis, shuddering, "I would not, for the world, put one of them on the gridiron!"

"No," added Philemon, making a wry face, "we could never relish them!"

"As for you, good Philemon," continued the elder traveler, "and you, kind Baucis,—you, with your scanty means, have mingled so much heartfelt hospitality with your entertainment of the homeless stranger, that the milk became an inexhaustible fount of nectar, and the brown loaf and the honey were ambrosia. Thus the divinities have feasted, at your board, off the same viands that supply their banquets on Olympus. You have done well, my dear old friends. Wherefore, request whatever favor you have most at heart, and it is granted."

Philemon and Baucis looked at one another, and then,—I know not which of the two it was who spoke, but that one uttered the desire of both their hearts.

"Let us live together, while we live, and leave the world at the same instant, when we die! For we have always loved each other!"

"Be it so," replied the stranger, with majestic kindness. "Now look towards your cottage."

They did so. But what was their surprise on beholding a tall edifice of white marble, with a wide open portal, occupying the spot where their humble residence had so lately stood!

"There is your home," said the stranger, beneficently smiling on them both. "Exercise your hospitality in yonder palace as freely as in the poor hovel to which you welcomed us last evening."

The old folks fell on their knees to thank him; but, behold! Neither he nor Quicksilver was there.

So Philemon and Baucis took up their residence in the

marble palace, and spent their time, with vast satisfaction to themselves, in making everybody jolly and comfortable who happened to pass that way. The milk pitcher, I must not forget to say, retained its marvelous quality of never being empty, when it was desirable to have it full. Whenever an honest, good-humored, and free-hearted guest took a draught from this pitcher, he invariably found it the sweetest and most invigorating fluid that ever ran down his throat. But if a cross and disagreeable curmudgeon happened to sip, he was pretty certain to twist his visage into a hard knot, and pronounce it sour milk!

Thus the old couple lived in their palace a great, great while, and grew older and older, and very old, indeed. At length, however, there came a summer morning when Philemon and Baucis failed to make their appearance, as on other mornings, with one hospitable smile overspreading both their pleasant faces, to invite the guests of overnight to breakfast. The guests searched everywhere, from top to bottom of the spacious palace, and all to no purpose. But, after a great deal of perplexity, they espied, in front of the portal, two venerable trees, which nobody could remember to have seen there the day before. Yet there they stood, with their roots fastened deep into the soil, and a huge breadth of foliage overshadowing the whole front of the edifice. One was an oak, and the other a linden tree. Their boughs — it was strange and beautiful to see — were intertwined together, and embraced one another, so that each tree seemed to live in the other tree's bosom much more than in its own.

While the guests were marveling how these trees, that must have required at least a century to grow, could have

come to be so tall and venerable in a single night, a breeze sprang up, and set their intermingled boughs astir. And then there was a deep, broad murmur in the air, as if the two mysterious trees were speaking.

"I am old Philemon!" murmured the oak.

"I am old Baucis!" murmured the linden tree.

But, as the breeze grew stronger, the trees both spoke at once, "Philemon! Baucis! Baucis! Philemon!" as if one were both and both were one, and talking together in the depths of their mutual heart. It was plain enough to perceive that the good old couple had renewed their age, and were now to spend a quiet and delightful hundred years or so, Philemon as an oak, and Baucis as a linden tree. And oh, what a hospitable shade did they fling around them! Whenever a wayfarer paused beneath it, he heard a pleasant whisper of the leaves above his head, and wondered how the sound should so much resemble words like these: "Welcome, welcome, dear traveler, welcome!"

And some kind soul, that knew what would have pleased old Baucis and old Philemon best, built a circular seat around both their trunks, where, for a great while afterwards, the weary, and the hungry, and the thirsty used to repose themselves and quaff milk abundantly out of the miraculous pitcher. And I wish for all our sakes that we had the pitcher here now.

THE PINE TREE SHILLINGS

From "Grandfather's Chair"

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

"ACCORDING to the most authentic records, my dear children," said Grandfather, "the chair about this time had the misfortune to break its leg. It was probable on account of this accident that it ceased to be the seat of the Governors of Massachusetts; for, assuredly, it would have been ominous of evil to the commonwealth if the Chair of State had tottered upon three legs. Being therefore sold at auction, — alas what a vicissitude for a chair that had figured in such high company! — our venerable friend was knocked down to a certain Captain John Hull. This old gentleman, on carefully examining the maimed chair, discovered that its broken leg might be clamped with iron and made as serviceable as ever."

"Here is the very leg that was broken!" exclaimed Charley, throwing himself down on the floor to look at it. "And here are the iron clamps. How well it was mended!"

When they had all sufficiently examined the broken leg, Grandfather told them a story about Captain John Hull and the Pine Tree Shillings.

The Captain John Hull aforesaid was the mintmaster of Massachusetts, and coined all the money that was made there. This was a new line of business; for in the earlier days of the colony the current coinage consisted of gold and silver money of England, Portugal, and Spain. These coins being scarce, the people were often forced to barter their commodities instead of selling them.

For instance, if a man wanted to buy a coat, he perhaps exchanged a bearskin for it. If he wished for a barrel of molasses, he might purchase it with a pile of pine boards. Musket balls were used instead of farthings. The Indians had a sort of money called wampum, which was made of clam shells; and this strange sort of specie was likewise taken in payment of debts by the English settlers. Bank bills had never been heard of. There was not money enough of any kind, in many parts of the country, to pay the salaries of the ministers; so that they sometimes had to take quintals of fish, or bushels of corn, or cords of wood, instead of silver or gold.

As the people grew more numerous, and their trade with one another increased, the want of current money was still more sensibly felt. To supply the demand, the general court passed a law for establishing a coinage of shillings, sixpences, and threepences. Captain John Hull was appointed to manufacture this money, and was to have one shilling out of every twenty to pay him for the trouble of making them.

Hereupon, all the old silver in the colony was handed over to Captain John Hull. The battered silver cans and tankards, I suppose, and silver buckles, and broken spoons, and silver buttons of worn out coats, and silver hilts of swords that had figured at court, — all such curious old articles were doubtless thrown into the melting pot together. But by far the greater part of the silver consisted of bullion from the mines of South America, which the English buccaneers — who were little better than pirates — had taken from the Spaniards and brought to Massachusetts.

All this old and new silver being melted down and coined, the result was an immense amount of splendid shillings, sixpences, and threepences. Each had the date, 1652, on the one side, and the figure of a pine tree on the other. Hence they were called pine tree shillings. And for every twenty shillings that he coined, you will remember, Captain John Hull was entitled to put one shilling into his own pocket.

The magistrates soon began to suspect that the mintmaster would have the best of the bargain. They offered him a large sum of money if he would but give up that twentieth shilling which he was continually dropping into his own pocket. But Captain Hull declared himself perfectly satisfied with the shilling. And well he might be; for so diligently did he labor that in a few years his pockets, his money bags, and his strong box were overflowing with pine tree shillings. This was probably the case when he came into possession of Grandfather's chair; and as he had worked so hard and so long at the mint, it was certainly proper that he should have a comfortable chair to rest himself in.

When the mintmaster had grown very rich, a young man, Samuel Sewell by name, came a courting to his only daughter. His daughter — whose name I do not know, but we will call her Betsey — was a fine, hearty damsel, by no means so slender as some young ladies of our own days. On the contrary, having always fed heartily on pumpkin pies, doughnuts, Indian puddings, and other Puritan dainties, she was as round and plump as a pudding herself.

With this round, rosy Miss Betsey did Samuel Sewell

fall in love. As he was a young man of good character, industrious in his business, and a member of the church, the mintmaster very readily gave his consent.

"Yes, you may take her," said he, in his rough way, "and you'll find her a heavy burden enough!"

On the wedding day, we may suppose that honest John Hull dressed himself in a plum-colored coat, all the buttons of which were made of pine tree shillings. The buttons of his waistcoat were sixpences; and the knees of his smallclothes were buttoned with silver threepences. Thus attired, he sat with great dignity in Grandfather's chair; and, being a portly old gentleman, he completely filled it from elbow to elbow. On the opposite side of the room, between her bridesmaids, sat Miss Betsey. She was blushing with all her might, and looked like a full-blown peony or a great red apple.

There, too, was the bridegroom, dressed in a fine purple coat and a gold lace waistcoat, with as much other finery as the Puritan laws and customs would allow him to put on. His hair was cropped close to his head, because Governor Endicott had forbidden any man to wear it below the ears. But he was a very personable young man, and so thought the bridesmaids, and Miss Betsey herself.

The mintmaster also was pleased with his new son-in-law, especially as he had courted Miss Betsey out of pure love, and had said nothing at all about her portion. So, when the marriage ceremony was over, Captain Hull whispered a word to two of his men servants, who immediately went out, and soon returned, lugging a pair of large scales. They were such a pair as wholesale mer-

chants use for weighing bulky commodities; and quite a bulky commodity was now to be weighed in them.

"Daughter Betsey," said the mintmaster, "get into one side of these scales."

Miss Betsey — or Mrs. Sewell, as we must now call her — did as she was bid, like a dutiful child, without any question of the why and wherefore. But what her father could mean, unless to make her husband pay for her by the pound (in which case she would have been a dear bargain), she had not the least idea.

"And now," said honest John Hull to the servants, "bring that box hither."

The box to which the mintmaster pointed was a huge, square, iron-bound, oaken chest; it was big enough, my children, for all four of you to play at hide and seek in. The servants tugged with might and main, but could not lift this enormous receptacle, and were finally obliged to drag it across the floor. Captain Hull then took a key from his girdle, unlocked the chest, and lifted its ponderous lid.

Behold! It was full to the brim of bright pine tree shillings, fresh from the mint; and Samuel Sewell began to think that his father-in-law had got possession of all the money in the Massachusetts treasury. But it was only the mintmaster's honest share of the coinage.

Then the servants, at Captain Hull's command, heaped double handfuls of the shillings into one side of the scales, while Betsey remained in the other. Jingle, jingle went the shillings, as handful after handful was thrown in, till, plump and ponderous as she was, they fairly weighed the young lady from the floor.

O for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild flower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the groundnut trails its vine,
Where the wood grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans! —
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks:
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy, —
Blessings on the barefoot boy.

O for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,

Me, their master waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming birds and honeybees;
For my sport the squirrel played;
Plied the snouted mole his spade,
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too:
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

O for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread, —
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the doorstone gray and rude!
O'er me like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold,
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;

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And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch; pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod;
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil;
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! That thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

SEPTEMBER

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

THE goldenrod is yellow
The corn is turning brown,

The trees in apple orchards
With fruit are bending down.

The gentian's bluest fringes
Are curling in the sun;
In dusty pods the milkweed
Its hidden silk has spun.

The sedges flaunt their harvest
In every meadow nook,
And asters by the brookside
Make asters in the brook.

From dewy lanes at morning
The grapes' sweet odors rise:
At noon the roads all flutter
With yellow butterflies.

By all these lovely tokens
September days are here,
With summer's best of weather
And autumn's best of cheer.

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THE PRAIRIE ON FIRE

From "The Prairie"

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

James Fenimore Cooper was born at Burlington, N.J., in 1789. When he was only two years old his father removed to Cooperstown, N.Y., where he had purchased a large tract of land at the foot of Otsego Lake. At thirteen years of age he entered Yale College, where he remained but three years, and left without graduating. He entered the navy as midshipman, and remained in the service six

years. In 1811 he married a Miss De Lancey. For a number of years they lived at Mamaroneck. His life here made him familiar with the country described in "The Spy," and some other works.

"The Pilot" is generally conceded to be the best sea tale ever written. "The Red Rover," "Jack Tier," "Wing and Wing," and "The Two Admirals" are also excellent. Among his most popular novels are the "Leatherstocking Tales," "The Last of the Mohicans" being generally regarded as the best. The others are "The Prairie," "The Pathfinder," "The Deerslayer," and "The Pioneers."

Cooper was the first great American writer of fiction, and the most thoroughly American of any the country has yet known. He was a prolific author, producing thirty-two novels in twenty-nine years besides a naval history of the United States, and several volumes of "Sketches" and "Gleanings."

THE sleep of the fugitives lasted for several hours. The trapper was the first to shake off its influence, as he had been the last to court its refreshment. Rising, just as the gray light of day began to brighten that portion of the studded vault which rested on the eastern margin of the plain, he summoned his companions from their warm lairs, and pointed out the necessity of their being once more on the alert.

"See, Middleton," exclaimed Inez, in a sudden burst of youthful pleasure, that caused her for a moment to forget her situation, "how lovely is that sky! Surely it contains a promise of happier times."

"It is glorious," returned her husband. "Glorious and heavenly is that streak of vivid red, and here is a still brighter crimson; rarely have I seen a richer rising of the sun."

"Rising of the sun," slowly repeated the old man, lifting his tall person from its seat, with a deliberate and abstracted air, while he kept his eye riveted on the chan-

ging and certainly beautiful tints that were garnishing the vault of heaven. "Rising of the sun! I like not such risings of the sun. Ah's me! The imps have circumvented us with a vengeance. The prairie is on fire."

"God in heaven protect us!" cried Middleton, catching Inez to his bosom, under the instant impression of the imminence of their danger. "There is no time to lose, old man; each instant is a day. Let us fly!"

"Whither?" demanded the trapper, motioning him, with calmness and dignity, to arrest his steps. "In this wilderness of grass and reeds, you are like a vessel in the broad lakes without a compass. A single step on the wrong course might prove the destruction of us all. It is seldom danger is so pressing, that there is not time enough for reason to do its work, young officer. Therefore, let us await its biddings."

"For my part," said Paul Hover, looking about him with no unequivocal expression of concern, "I acknowledge that should this dry bed of weeds get fairly in a flame, a bee would have to make a flight higher than common to prevent his wings from scorching. Therefore, old trapper, I agree with the captain, and say, mount and run!"

"Ye are wrong, ye are wrong. Man is not a beast, to follow the gift of instinct, and to snuff up his knowledge by a taint in the air, or a rumbling in the sound; but he must see and reason, and then conclude. So, follow me a little to the left, where there is a rising in the ground, whence we may make our reconnoiterings."

The old man waved his hand with authority, and led the way without further parlance to the spot he had indicated, followed by the whole of his alarmed companions.

An eye less practiced than that of the trapper, might have failed in discovering the gentle elevation to which he alluded, and which looked on the surface of the meadow like a growth a little taller than common.

When they reached the place, however, the stinted grass itself announced the absence of that moisture which had fed the rank weeds of most of the plain, and furnished a clew to the evidence, by which he had judged of the formation of the ground hidden beneath. Here a few minutes were lost in breaking down the tops of the surrounding herbage,—which, notwithstanding the advantage of their position, rose even above the heads of Middleton and Paul,—and in obtaining a lookout that might command a view of the surrounding sea of fire.

The examination which his companions so instantly and so intently made, rather served to assure them of their desperate situation than to appease their fears. Huge columns of smoke were rolling up from the plain, and thickening in gloomy masses around the horizon. The red glow which gleamed upon the enormous folds, now lighting their volumes with the glare of the conflagration, now flashed to another point, as the flame beneath glided ahead, leaving all behind enveloped in awful darkness, and proclaiming louder than words the character of the imminent and rapidly approaching danger.

"This is terrible," exclaimed Middleton, folding the trembling Inez to his heart. "At such a time as this, and in such a manner!"

"The gates of Heaven are open to all who truly believe," murmured the pious devotee in his bosom.

"This resignation is maddening! But we are men, and

will make a struggle for our lives. How now, my brave and spirited friend, shall we yet mount and push across the flames, or shall we stand here, and see those we most love perish in this frightful manner without an effort?"

"I am for a swarming time, and a flight, before the hive is too hot to hold us," said the bee hunter, to whom it will be at once seen that the half-distracted Middleton addressed himself. "Come, old trapper, you must acknowledge this is but a slow way of getting out of danger. If we tarry here much longer, it will be in the fashion that the bees lie around the straw, after the hive has been smoked for its honey. You may hear the fire begin to roar already; and I know by experience, that when the flame once gets fairly into the prairie grass, it is no sloth that can outrun it."

"Think you," returned the old man, pointing scornfully at the mazes of the dry and matted grass which environed them, "that mortal feet can outstrip the speed of fire on such a path?"

"What say you, friend doctor," cried the bewildered Paul, turning to the naturalist, with that sort of helplessness with which the strong are often apt to seek aid of the weak, when human power is baffled by the hand of a mightier Being, "what say you? Have you no advice to give away, in a case of life and death?"

The naturalist stood, tablets in hands, looking at the awful spectacle with as much composure as though the conflagration had been lighted in order to solve the difficulties of some scientific problem. Aroused by the question of his companion, he turned to his equally calm, though differently occupied associate, the trapper, demanding, with the most provoking insensibility to the

urgent nature of their situation: "Venerable hunter, you have often witnessed similar prismatic experiments —"

He was rudely interrupted by Paul, who struck the tablets from his hands with a violence that betrayed the utter intellectual confusion which had overset the equanimity of his mind. Before time was allowed for remonstrance, the old man, who had continued during the whole scene like one much at a loss how to proceed, though, also, like one who was rather perplexed than alarmed, suddenly assumed a decided air, as if he no longer doubted on the course it was most advisable to pursue.

"It is time to be doing," he said, interrupting the controversy that was about to ensue between the naturalist and the bee hunter; "it is time to leave off books and moanings, and to be doing."

"You have come to your recollections too late, miserable old man!" cried Middleton; "the flames are within a quarter of a mile of us, and the wind is bringing them down in this quarter with dreadful rapidity."

"Anan! The flames! I care but little for the flames. If I only knew how to circumvent the cunning of the Tetons as I know how to cheat the fire of its prey, there would be nothing needed but thanks to the Lord for our deliverance.

"Do you call this a fire? If you had seen what I have witnessed in the eastern hills, when mighty mountains were like the furnace of a smith, you would have known what it was to fear the flames, and to be thankful that you were spared. Come, lads, come; 'tis time to be doing now, and to cease talking, for yonder curling flame is truly coming on like a trotting moose. Put hands upon this

short and withered grass where we stand, and lay bare the earth."

"Would you think to deprive the fire of its victims in this childish manner?" exclaimed Middleton.

A faint but solemn smile passed over the features of the old man, as he answered: "Your gran'ther would have said, that when the enemy was nigh, a soldier could do no better than to obey."

The captain felt the reproof, and instantly began to imitate the industry of Paul, who was tearing the decayed herbage from the ground in a sort of desperate compliance with the trapper's direction. Even Ellen lent her hands to the labor, nor was it long before Inez was seen similarly employed, though none among them knew why or wherefore. When life is thought to be the reward of labor, men are wont to be industrious. A very few moments sufficed to lay bare a spot of some twenty feet in diameter.

Into one edge of this little area the trapper brought the females, directing Middleton and Paul to cover their light and inflammable dresses with the blankets of the party. So soon as this precaution was observed, the old man approached the opposite side of the grass, which still environed them in a tall and dangerous circle, and selecting a handful of the driest of the herbage, he placed it over the pan of his rifle. The light combustible kindled at the flash. Then he placed the little flame into a bed of standing fog, and, withdrawing from the spot to the center of the ring, he patiently awaited the result.

The subtle element seized with avidity upon its new fuel, and in a moment forked flames were gliding among

the grass, as the tongues of ruminating animals are seen rolling among their food, apparently in quest of its sweetest portions.

"Now," said the old man, holding up a finger, and laughing in his peculiarly silent manner, "you shall see fire fight fire! Ah's me! Many is the time I have burnt a smooty path from wanton laziness to pick my way across a tangled bottom."

"But is this not fatal?" cried the amazed Middleton. "Are you not bringing the enemy nigher to us instead of avoiding it?"

"Do you scorch so easily? Your gran'ther had a tougher skin. But we shall live to see; we shall all live to see."

The experience of the trapper was in the right. As the fire gained strength and heat, it began to spread on three sides, dying of itself on the fourth for want of aliment. As it increased, and the sullen roaring announced its power, it cleared everything before it, leaving the black and smoking soil far more naked than if the scythe had swept the place. The situation of the fugitives would have still been hazardous had not the area enlarged as the flame encircled them. But, by advancing to the spot where the trapper had kindled the grass, they avoided the heat; and in a very few moments, the flames began to recede in every quarter, leaving them enveloped in a cloud of smoke, but perfectly safe from the torrent of fire that was still furiously rolling onward.

The spectators regarded the simple expedient of the trapper with that species of wonder with which the courtiers of Ferdinand are said to have viewed the manner in

which Columbus made his egg to stand on its end, though with feelings that were filled with gratitude instead of envy.

"Most wonderful!" said Middleton, when he saw the complete success of the means by which they had been rescued from a danger that he had conceived to be unavoidable. "The thought was a gift from Heaven, and the hand that executed it should be immortal."

"Old trapper," cried Paul, thrusting his fingers through his shaggy locks, "I have lined many a loaded bee into his hole, and know something of the nature of the woods, but this is robbing a hornet of his sting without touching the insect."

"It will do, it will do," returned the old man, who, after the first moment of his success, seemed to think no more of the exploit. "Let the flames do their work for a short half hour, and then we will mount. That time is needed to cool the meadow, for these unshod beasts are tender on the hoof as a barefooted girl."

CAPTURE OF THE WHALE

From "The Pilot"

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

"A CHARMING prospect this, Master Coffin, but rather too much poetry in it for your taste; I believe you relish no land that is of a harder consistency than mud."

"I was born on the waters, sir," returned the coxswain, from his snug abode, where he was bestowed with his usual economy of room, "and it's according to all things for a man to love his native soil. I'll not deny,

Captain Barnstable, but I would rather drop my anchor on a bottom that won't broom a keel, though, at the same time, I harbor no great malice against dry land."

"I shall never forgive it, myself, if any accident has befallen Griffith in this excursion," rejoined the lieutenant; "his pilot may be a better man on the water than on terra firma, long Tom."

The coxswain turned his solemn visage, with an extraordinary meaning, toward his commander, before he replied: —

"For as long a time as I have followed the waters, sir, and that has been ever since I've drawn my rations, seeing that I was born while the boat was crossing Nantucket shoals, I've never known a pilot come off in greater need than the one we fell in with, when we made that stretch or two on the land, in the dogwatch of yesterday."

"Ay! The fellow has played his part like a man; the occasion was great, and it seems that he was quite equal to his work."

"The frigate's people tell me, sir, that he handled the ship like a top," continued the coxswain; "but she is a ship that is a natural inimy of the bottom."

"Can you say as much for this boat, Master Coffin?" cried Barnstable. "Keep her out of the surf, or you'll have us rolling in upon the beach, presently, like an empty water cask; you must remember that we cannot all wade, like yourself, in two fathom water."

The coxswain cast a cool glance at the crests of foam that were breaking over the tops of the billows, within a few yards of where their boat was riding, and called aloud to his men: —

"Pull a stroke or two; away with her into dark water."

The drop of the oars resembled the movements of a nice machine, and the light boat skimmed along the water like a duck, that approaches to the very brink of some imminent danger, and then avoids it, at the most critical moment, apparently without an effort. While this necessary movement was making, Barnstable arose, and surveyed the cliffs with keen eyes, and then, turning once more in disappointment from his search, he said: —

"Pull more from the land, and let her run down at an easy stroke to the schooner. Keep a lookout at the cliffs, boys; it is possible that they are stowed in some of the holes in the rocks, for it's no daylight business they are on."

The order was promptly obeyed, and they had glided along for nearly a mile in this manner, in the most profound silence, when suddenly the stillness was broken by a heavy rush of air and a dash of water, seemingly at no great distance from them.

"By heaven, Tom," cried Barnstable, starting, "there is the blow of a whale!"

"Ay, ay, sir," returned the coxswain with undisturbed composure; "here is his spout not half a mile to seaward; the easterly gale has driven the creature to leeward, and he begins to find himself in shoal water. He's been sleeping, while he should have been working to windward."

"The fellow takes it coolly, too; he's in no hurry to get an offing."

"I rather conclude, sir," said the coxswain, rolling over his tobacco in his mouth, very composedly, while his little sunken eyes began to twinkle with pleasure at the

sight, "the gentleman has lost his reckoning, and don't know which way to head to take himself back into blue water."

"'Tis a finback," exclaimed the lieutenant; "he will soon make headway, and be off."

"No, sir, 'tis a right whale," answered Tom; "I saw his spout. He threw up a pair of as pretty rainbows as a Christian would wish to look at. He's a raal oil-butt, that fellow!"

Barnstable laughed, turned himself away from the tempting sight, and tried to look at the cliffs; and then unconsciously bent his longing eyes again on the sluggish animal, who was throwing his huge carcass, at times many feet from the water, in idle gambols. The temptation for sport, and the recollection of his early habits, at length prevailed over his anxiety in behalf of his friends, and the young officer inquired of his coxswain: —

"Is there any whale-line in the boat, to make fast to that harpoon which you bear about with you in fair weather or foul?"

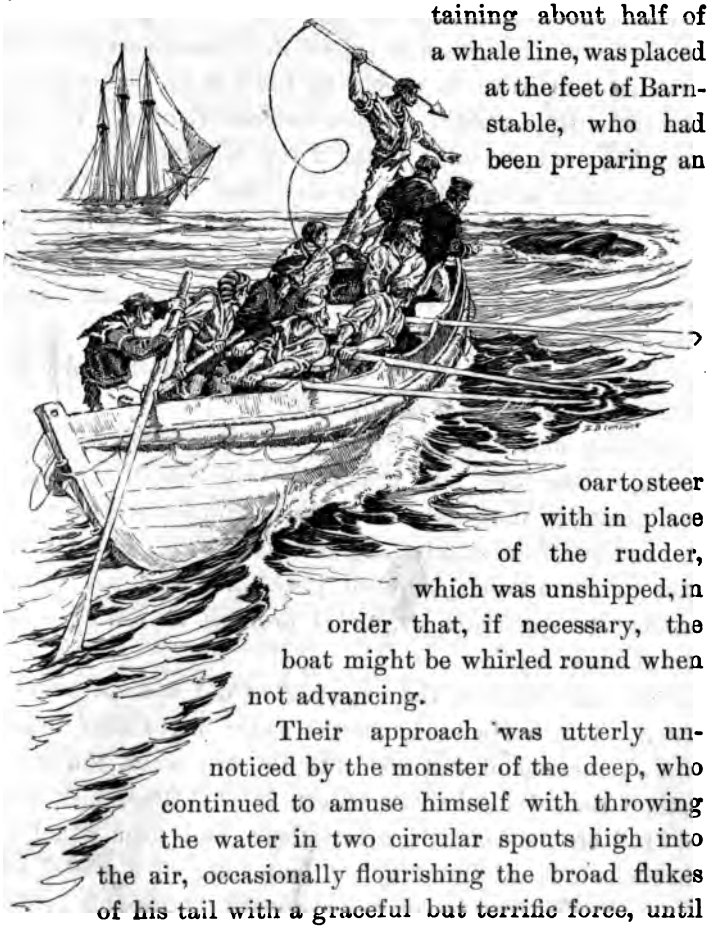
"I never trust the boat from the schooner without part of a shot, sir," returned the coxswain; "there is something nateral in the sight of a tub to my old eyes."

Barnstable looked at his watch, and again at the cliffs, when he exclaimed, in joyous tones: —

"Give strong way, my hearties! There seems nothing better to be done; let us have a stroke of a harpoon at that impudent rascal."

The men shouted spontaneously, and the old coxswain suffered his solemn visage to relax into a small laugh, while the whaleboat sprang forward like a courser for the

goal. During the few minutes they were pulling toward their game, long Tom arose from his crouching attitude in the stern sheets, and transferred his huge form to the bows of the boat, where he made such preparations to strike the whale as the occasion required. The tub, containing about half of a whale line, was placed at the feet of Barnstable, who had been preparing an



oar to steer with in place of the rudder, which was unshipped, in order that, if necessary, the boat might be whirled round when not advancing.

Their approach was utterly unnoticed by the monster of the deep, who continued to amuse himself with throwing the water in two circular spouts high into the air, occasionally flourishing the broad flukes of his tail with a graceful but terrific force, until

the hardy seamen were within a few hundred feet of him, when he suddenly cast his head downward, and, without an apparent effort, reared his immense body for many feet above the water, waving his tail violently, and producing a noise that sounded like the rushing of winds.

The coxswain stood erect, poising his harpoon, ready for the blow ; but when he beheld the creature assume this formidable attitude, he waved his hand to his commander, who instantly signed to his men to cease rowing. In this situation the sportsmen rested a few moments, while the whale struck several blows on the water in rapid succession, the noise of which reëchoed along the cliffs like the hollow reports of so many cannon. After this wanton exhibition of his terrible strength, the monster sank again into his native element, and slowly disappeared.

" Which way did he head, Tom ? " cried Barnstable, the moment the whale was out of sight.

" Pretty much up and down, sir," returned the coxswain, whose eye was gradually brightening with the excitement of the sport; "he'll soon run his nose against the bottom if he stands long on that course, and will be glad to get another snuff of pure air; send her a few fathoms to starboard, sir, and I promise we shall not be out of his track."

The conjecture of the experienced old seaman proved true ; for in a few moments the water broke near them, and another spout was cast into the air, when the huge animal rushed for half its length in the same direction, and fell on the sea with a turbulence and foam equal to that which is produced by the launching of a vessel for the first time into its proper element. After this evolu-

tion the whale rolled heavily, and seemed to rest from further efforts.

His slightest movements were closely watched by Barnstable and his coxswain, and when he was in a state of comparative rest, the former gave a signal to his crew to ply their oars once more. A few long and vigorous strokes sent the boat directly up to the broadside of the whale, with its bows pointing toward one of the fins, which was at times, as the animal yielded sluggishly to the action of the waves, exposed to view. The coxswain poised his harpoon with much precision, and then darted it from him with a violence that buried the iron in the blubber of their foe. The instant the blow was made, long Tom shouted: — "Starn all!"

"Stern all!" echoed Barnstable; when the obedient seamen, by united efforts, forced the boat in a backward direction beyond the reach of any blow from their formidable antagonist. The alarmed animal, however, meditated no such resistance; ignorant of his own power, and of the insignificance of his enemies, he sought refuge in flight. One moment of stupid surprise succeeded the entrance of the iron, when he cast his huge tail into the air, with a violence that threw the sea around him into increased commotion, and then disappeared amid a cloud of foam.

"Snub him!" shouted Barnstable; "hold on, Tom; he rises already."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the composed coxswain, seizing the line which was running out of the boat with a velocity that rendered such a maneuver rather hazardous, and causing it to yield more gradually round the large loggerhead that was placed in the bows of the boat for that

purpose. Presently the line stretched forward, and rising to the surface with tremulous vibration, it indicated the direction in which the animal might be expected to reappear. Barnstable had cast the bows of the boat toward that point, before the terrified and wounded victim rose once more to the surface, whose time was, however, no longer wasted in his sports, but who cast the waters aside, as he forced his way with prodigious velocity along the surface. The boat was dragged violently in his wake, and cut through the billows with a terrific rapidity, that at the moment appeared to bury the slight fabric in the ocean. When long Tom beheld his victim throwing his spouts on high again, he pointed with exultation to the jetting fluid, which was streaked with blood, and cried: —

"Ay! I've touched the fellow's life. It must be more than two foot of blubber that stops my iron from reaching the life of any whale that ever sculled the ocean."

"I believe you have saved yourself the trouble of using the bayonet you have rigged for a lance," said his commander, who entered into the sport with all the ardor of one whose youth had been chiefly passed in such pursuits; "feel your line, Master Coffin; can we haul alongside of our enemy? I like not the course he is steering, as he tows us from the schooner."

"'Tis the creater's way, sir," said the coxswain; "they need the air in their nostrils when they run, the same as a man. But lay hold, boys, and let's haul up to him."

The seamen now seized the whale line, and slowly drew their boat to within a few feet of the tail of the fish, whose progress became sensibly less rapid, as he grew weak with the loss of blood. In a few minutes he stopped running,

and appeared to roll uneasily on the water, as if suffering the agony of death.

"Shall we pull in, and finish him, Tom?" cried Barnstable. "A few sets from your bayonet would do it."

The coxswain stood examining his game with cool discretion, and replied to this interrogatory: —

"No, sir, no, he's going into his flurry; there's no occasion for disgracing ourselves by using a soldier's weapon in taking a whale. Starn off, sir, starn off! The creater's in his flurry."

The warning of the prudent coxswain was promptly obeyed, and the boat cautiously drew off to a distance, leaving to the animal a clear space while under its dying agonies. From a state of perfect rest, the terrible monster threw its tail on high, as when in sport, but its blows were trebled in rapidity and violence, till all was hid from view by a pyramid of foam that was deeply dyed with blood. The roarings of the fish were like the bellowing of a herd of bulls; and to one who was ignorant of the fact, it would have appeared as if a thousand monsters were engaged in deadly combat behind the bloody mist that obstructed the view. Gradually these effects subsided, and when the discolored water again settled down to the long and regular swell of the ocean, the fish was seen, exhausted, and yielding passively to its fate. As life departed, the enormous black mass rolled to one side; and when the white and glistening skin of the belly became apparent, the seamen well knew that their victory was achieved.

"What's to be done, now?" said Barnstable, as he stood and gazed with a diminished excitement at their

victim. "He will yield no food, and his carcass will drift to land, and furnish our enemies with the oil."

"If I but had that creater in Boston Bay," said the coxswain, "it would prove the making of me; but such is my luck forever! Pull up, at any rate, and let me get my harpoon and line; the English shall never get them while old Tom Coffin can blow."

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET

From "The Last of the Mohicans"

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

THERE yet lingered sufficient light in the heavens to exhibit those bright openings among the tree tops where different paths left the clearing to enter the depths of the wilderness. Beneath one of them, a line of warriors issued from the woods and advanced slowly toward the dwellings. One in front bore a short pole, on which, as it afterward appeared, were suspended seven human scalps. The startling sounds that Duncan had heard were what the whites have not inappropriately called the "death hallo," and each repetition of the cry was intended to announce to the tribe the fate of an enemy. Thus far the knowledge of Heyward assisted him in the explanation; and as he knew that the interruption was caused by the unlooked-for return of a successful war party, every disagreeable sensation was quieted in inward congratulations for the relief and insignificance it conferred on himself.

When at the distance of a few hundred feet from the lodges, the newly arrived warriors halted. The plaintive and terrific cry which was intended to represent equally

the wailings of the dead and the triumph of the victors, had entirely ceased. One of their number now called aloud, in words that were far more appalling, though not more intelligible to those for whose ear they were intended than their expressive yells. It would be difficult to convey a suitable idea of the savage ecstasy with which the news thus imparted was received. The whole encampment in a moment became a scene of the most violent bustle and commotion. The warriors drew their knives, and, flourishing them, they arranged themselves in two lines, forming a lane that extended from the war party to the lodges. The squaws seized clubs, axes, or whatever weapon of offense first offered itself to their hands, and rushed eagerly to act their part in the cruel game. Even the children would not be excluded; but boys, little able to wield the instruments, tore the tomahawks from the belts of their fathers, and stole into the ranks, apt imitators of the savage traits exhibited by their parents.

Large piles of brush lay scattered about the clearing, and a wary and aged squaw was occupied firing as many as might serve to light the coming exhibition. As the flame arose, its power exceeded that of the parting day, and assisted to render objects at the same time more distinct and more hideous. The whole scene formed a striking picture whose frame was composed of the dark and tall border of pines. The warriors just arrived were the most distant figures. A little in advance stood two men, who were apparently selected from the rest as the principal actors in what was to follow. The light was not strong enough to render their features distinct, though it was quite evident that they were governed by very dif-

ferent emotions. While one stood erect and firm, prepared to meet his fate like a hero, the other bowed his head as if palsied by terror or stricken with shame. The high-spirited Duncan felt a powerful impulse of admiration and pity toward the former, though no opportunity could offer to exhibit his generous emotions. He watched his slightest movement, however, with eager eyes ; and, as he traced the fine outline of his admirably proportioned and active frame, he endeavored to persuade himself that if the powers of man, seconded by such noble resolution, could bear one harmless through so severe a trial, the youthful captive before him might hope for success in the hazardous race he was about to run. Insensibly the young man drew nigher to the swarthy lines of the Hurons, and scarcely breathed, so intense became his interest in the spectacle. Just then the signal yell was given, and the momentary quiet which had preceded it was broken by a

burst of cries that far exceeded any before heard. The most abject of the two victims continued motionless ; but the other bounded from the place at the cry, with the activity and swiftness of a deer. Instead of rushing through the hostile lines as had been expected, he just entered the dangerous defile, and before time was given for a single blow, turned short and, leaping the heads of a row of children, he gained at once the exterior and safer side of the formidable array. The artifice was answered by a hundred voices raised in imprecations, and the whole of the excited multitude broke from their order and spread themselves about the place in wild confusion.

A dozen blazing piles now shed their lurid brightness on the place, which resembled some unhallowed and supernatural arena in which malicious demons had assembled to act their bloody and lawless rites. The forms in the background looked like unearthly beings gliding before the eye and cleaving the air with frantic and unmeaning gestures; while the savage passions of such as passed the flames were rendered fearfully distinct by the gleams that shot athwart their inflamed visages.

It will be easily understood that amid such a concourse of vindictive enemies, no breathing time was allowed the fugitive. There was a single moment when it seemed as if he would have reached the forest; but the whole body of his captors threw themselves before him and drove him back into the center of his relentless persecutors. Turning like a headed deer, he shot with the swiftness of an arrow through a pillar of forked flames, and, passing the whole multitude harmless, he appeared on the opposite side of the clearing. Here, too, he was met and turned

by a few of the older and more subtle of the Hurons. Once more he tried the throng, as if seeking safety in its blindness; and then several moments succeeded, during which Duncan believed the active and courageous young stranger was lost.

Nothing could be distinguished but a dark mass of human forms tossed and involved in inexplicable confusion. Arms, gleaming knives, and formidable clubs appeared above them, but the blows were evidently given at random. The awful effect was heightened by the piercing shrieks of the women and the fierce yells of the warriors. Now and then Duncan caught a glimpse of a light form cleaving the air in some desperate bound, and he rather hoped than believed that the captive yet retained the command of his astonishing powers of activity. Suddenly the multitude rolled backward, and approached the spot where he himself stood. The heavy body in the rear pressed upon the women and children in front, and bore them to the earth. The stranger reappeared in the confusion. Human power could not, however, much longer endure so severe a trial. Of this the captive seemed conscious. Profiting by the momentary opening, he darted from among the warriors, and made a desperate, and what seemed to Duncan a final, effort to gain the wood. As if aware that no danger was to be apprehended from the young soldier, the fugitive nearly brushed his person in his flight. A tall and powerful Huron, who had husbanded his forces, pressed close upon his heels, and with an uplifted arm menaced a fatal blow. Duncan thrust forth a foot, and the shock precipitated the eager savage headlong, many feet in advance of his intended victim. Thought itself is

not quicker than was the motion with which the latter profited by the advantage; he turned, gleamed like a meteor again before the eyes of Duncan, and at the next moment, when the latter recovered his recollection and gazed around in quest of the captive, he saw him quietly leaning against a small painted post which stood before the door of the principal lodge.

Apprehensive that the part he had taken in the escape might prove fatal to himself, Duncan left the place without delay. He followed the crowd which drew nigh the lodges, gloomy and sullen, like any other multitude that had been disappointed in an execution. Curiosity, or perhaps a better feeling, induced him to approach the stranger. He found him standing with one arm cast about the protecting post, and breathing thick and hard after his exertions, but disdaining to permit a single sign of suffering to escape. His person was now protected by immemorial and sacred usage, until the tribe in council had deliberated and determined on his fate. It was not difficult, however, to foretell the result, if any presage could be drawn from the feelings of those who crowded the place.

There was no term of abuse known to the Huron vocabulary that the disappointed women did not lavishly expend on the successful stranger. They flouted at his efforts, and told him with bitter scoffs that his feet were better than his hands, and that he merited wings, while he knew not the use of an arrow or a knife. To all this the captive made no reply, but was content to preserve an attitude in which dignity was singularly blended with disdain. Exasperated as much by his composure as by

his good fortune, their words became unintelligible, and were succeeded by shrill, piercing yells. Just then the crafty squaw who had taken the necessary precaution to fire the piles made her way through the throng, and cleared a place for herself in front of the captive.

The squalid and withered person of this hag might well have obtained for her the character of possessing more than human cunning. Throwing back her light vestment, she stretched forth her long skinny arm in derision, and using the language of the Lenape, as more intelligible to the subject of her gibes, she commenced aloud: —

"Look you, Delaware," she said, snapping her fingers in his face, "your nation is a race of women, and the hoe is better fitted to your hands than a gun. Your squaws are the mothers of deer; but if a bear or a wildcat or a serpent were born among you, ye would flee. The Huron girls shall make you petticoats, and we will find you a husband."

A burst of savage laughter succeeded this attack, during which the soft and musical merriment of the younger females strangely chimed with the cracked voice of their older and more malignant companion. But the stranger was superior to all their efforts. His head was immovable, nor did he betray the slightest consciousness that they were present, except when his haughty eye rolled toward the dusky forms of the warriors who stalked in the background, silent and sullen observers of the scene.

Infuriated at the self-command of the captive, the woman placed her arms akimbo, and throwing herself into a posture of defiance she broke out anew, in a torrent of words that no art of ours could commit successfully to paper. Her breath was, however, expended in vain; for

although distinguished in her nation as a proficient in the art of abuse, she was permitted to work herself into such a fury as actually to foam at the mouth, without causing a muscle to vibrate in the motionless figure of the stranger. The effect of his indifference began to extend itself to the other spectators, and a youngster who was just quitting the condition of a boy to enter the state of manhood, attempted to assist the termagant by flourishing his tomahawk before their victim and adding his empty boasts to the taunts of the woman. Then, indeed, the captive turned his face toward the light, and looked down on the stripling with an expression that was superior to contempt. At the next moment he resumed his quiet and reclining attitude against the post. But the change of posture had permitted Duncan to exchange glances with the firm and piercing eyes of Uncas.

Breathless with amazement, and heavily oppressed with the critical situation of his friend, Heyward recoiled before the look, trembling lest its meaning might in some unknown manner hasten the prisoner's fate. There was not, however, any instant cause for such apprehension. Just then a warrior forced his way into the exasperated crowd. Motioning the woman and children aside with a stern gesture, he took Uncas by the arm and led him toward the door of the council lodge. Thither all the chiefs and most of the distinguished warriors followed, among whom the anxious Heyward found means to enter without attracting any dangerous attention to himself.

A few minutes were consumed in disposing of those present in a manner suitable to their rank and influence in the tribe. An order very similar to that adopted in the

preceding interview was observed, the aged and superior occupying the area of the spacious apartment, within the powerful light of a glaring torch, while their juniors and inferiors were arranged in the background, presenting a dark outline of swarthy and marked visages. In the very center of the lodge, immediately under an opening that admitted the twinkling light of one or two stars, stood Uncas, calm, elevated, and collected. His high and haughty carriage was not lost on his captors, who often bent their looks on his person with eyes which, while they lost none of their inflexibility of purpose, plainly betrayed their admiration of the stranger's daring.

The case was different with the individual whom Duncan had observed to stand forth with his friend previously to the desperate trial of speed; and who, instead of joining in the chase, had remained throughout its turbulent uproar like a cringing statue, expressive of shame and disgrace. Though not a hand had been extended to greet him nor yet an eye had condescended to watch his movements, he had also entered the lodge, as though impelled by a fate to whose decrees he submitted, seemingly without a struggle. Heyward profited by the first opportunity to gaze in his face, secretly apprehensive he might find the features of another acquaintance; but they proved to be those of a stranger, and what was still more inexplicable, of one who bore all the distinctive marks of a Huron warrior. Instead of mingling with his tribe, however, he sat apart, a solitary being in a multitude, his form shrinking into a crouching and abject attitude, as if anxious to fill as little space as possible. When each individual had taken his proper station, and silence reigned in the place,

the gray-haired chief, already introduced to the reader, spoke aloud, in the language of the Lenni Lenape.

"Delaware," he said, "though one of a nation of women, you have proved yourself a man. I would give you food; but he who eats with a Huron should become his friend. Rest in peace till the morning sun, when our last words shall be spoken."

"Seven nights and as many summer days have I fasted on the trail of the Huron," Uncas coldly replied; "the children of the Lenape know how to travel the path of the just without lingering to eat."

"Two of my young men are in pursuit of your companion," resumed the other, without appearing to regard the boast of his captive; "when they get back, then will our wise men say to you, 'Live or die.'"

"Has a Huron no ears?" scornfully exclaimed Uncas; "twice since he has been your prisoner has the Delaware heard a gun that he knows. Your young men will never come back."

A short and sullen pause succeeded this bold assertion. Duncan, who understood the Mohican to allude to the fatal rifle of the scout, bent forward in earnest observation of the effect it might produce on the conquerors; but the chief was content with simply retorting: —

"If the Lenape are so skillful, why is one of their bravest warriors here?"

"He followed in the steps of a flying coward, and fell into a snare. The cunning beaver may be caught."

As Uncas thus replied, he pointed with his finger toward the solitary Huron, but without deigning to bestow any other notice on so unworthy an object. The words of the

answer and the air of the speaker produced a strong sensation among his auditors. Every eye rolled suddenly toward the individual indicated by the simple gesture, and a low threatening murmur passed through the crowd. The ominous sounds reached the outer door, and the women and children pressing into the throng, no gap had been left between shoulder and shoulder that was not now filled with the dark lineaments of some eager and curious human countenance.

In the meantime the more aged chiefs in the center communed with each other in short and broken sentences. Not a word was uttered that did not convey the meaning of the speaker, in the simplest and most energetic form.

Again a long and deeply solemn pause took place. It was known by all present to be the grave precursor of a weighty and important judgment. They who composed the outer circle of faces were on tiptoe to gaze; and even the culprit for an instant forgot his shame in a deeper emotion, and exposed his abject features in order to cast an anxious and troubled glance at the dark assemblage of chiefs. The silence was finally broken by the aged warrior so often named. He arose from the earth, and moving past the immovable form of Uncas, placed himself in a dignified attitude before the offender. At that moment the withered squaw already mentioned moved into the circle in a slow, sidling sort of a dance, holding the torch, and muttering the indistinct words of what might have been a species of incantation. Though her presence was altogether an intrusion, it was unheeded.

Approaching Uncas, she held the blazing brand in such a manner as to cast its red glare on his person and to ex-

pose the slightest emotion of his countenance. The Mohican maintained his firm and haughty attitude; and his eye, so far from deigning to meet her inquisitive look, dwelt steadily on the distance, as though it penetrated the obstacles which impeded the view, and looked into futurity. Satisfied with her examination, she left him with a slight expression of pleasure, and proceeded to practice the same trying experiment on her delinquent countryman.

The young Huron was in his war paint, and very little of a finely molded form was concealed by his attire. The light rendered every limb and joint discernible, and Duncan turned away in horror when he saw they were writhing in inexpressible agony. The woman was commencing a low and plaintive howl at the sad and shameful spectacle, when the chief put forth his hand and gently pushed her aside.

"Reed-that-bends," he said, addressing the young culprit by name, and in his proper language, "though the Great Spirit has made you pleasant to the eyes, it would have been better that you had not been born. Your tongue is loud in the village, but in battle it is still. None of my young men strike the tomahawk deeper into the war post, none of them so lightly on the Yengeese. The enemy know the shape of your back, but they have never seen the color of your eyes. Three times have they called on you to come, and as often did you forget to answer. Your name will never be mentioned again in your tribe; it is already forgotten."

As the chief slowly uttered these words, pausing impressively between each sentence, the culprit raised his

face, in deference to the other's rank and years. Shame, horror, and pride struggled in its lineaments. His eye, which was contracted with inward anguish, gleamed on the persons of those whose breath was his fame; and the latter emotion for an instant predominated. He arose to his feet and, baring his bosom, looked steadily on the keen, glittering knife that was already upheld by his inexorable judge. As the weapon passed slowly into his heart, he even smiled, as if in joy at having found death less dreadful than he anticipated, and fell heavily on his face at the feet of the rigid and unyielding Uncas.

The squaw gave a loud and plaintive yell, dashed the torch to the earth, and buried everything in darkness. The whole shuddering group of spectators glided from the lodge like troubled spirits; and Duncan thought that he and the yet throbbing body of the victim of an Indian judgment had now become its only tenants.

THE PILOT

From "The Pilot"

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

DURING this time, the sea was becoming more agitated, and the violence of the wind was gradually increasing. Still the hardy and experienced mariners who directed her movements held her to the course that was necessary to their preservation, and still Griffith gave forth, when directed by their unknown pilot, those orders that turned her in the narrow channel where safety was alone to be found.

"Now is the time to watch her closely, Mr. Griffith," cried the pilot. "Here we get the true tide and the real danger. Place the best quartermaster of your ship in those chains, and let an officer stand by him and see that he gives us the right water."

"I will take that office on myself," said the captain. "Pass a light into the weather main chains."

"Stand by your braces!" exclaimed the pilot, with startling quickness. "Heave away that lead!" While deep expectation pervaded the frigate, the piercing cry of the leadsman as he called, "By the mark seven!" rose above the tempest, crossed over the decks, and appeared to pass away to leeward, borne on the blast like the warnings of some water spirit.

"'Tis well," returned the pilot, calmly; "try it again."

The short pause was succeeded by another cry, "And a half five."

"She shoals! She shoals!" exclaimed Griffith; "keep her a good full!"

"Ay, you must hold the vessel in command now," said the pilot, with those cool tones that are most appalling in critical moments, because they seem to denote most preparation and care.

The third call, "By the deep four," was followed by prompt direction from the stranger to tack.

Griffith seemed to emulate the coolness of the pilot in issuing the necessary orders to execute this maneuver.

The vessel rose slowly from the inclined position into which she had been forced by the tempest, and the sails were shaking violently, as if to release themselves from their confinement, while the ship stemmed the billows,

when the well-known voice of the sailing master was heard shouting from the forecastle : —

"Breakers ! Breakers ! Dead ahead ! "

This appalling sound seemed yet to be lingering about the ship, when a second voice cried : —

" Breakers on our lee bow ! "

" We are in the bite of the shoals, Mr. Gray," cried the commander. " She loses her way ; perhaps an anchor might hold her."

" Clear away the best bower ! " shouted Griffith through his trumpet.

" Hold on ! " cried the pilot, in a voice that reached the very heart of all who heard him. " Hold on everything ! "

The young man turned fiercely to the daring stranger who thus defied the discipline of his vessel, and at once demanded : —

" Who is it that dares to countermand my orders ? Is it not enough that you run the ship into danger, but you must interfere to keep her there ? If another word —"

" Peace, Mr. Griffith," interrupted the captain, bending from the rigging, his gray locks blowing about in the wind, and adding a look of wildness to the haggard care that he exhibited by the light of his lantern ; " yield the trumpet to Mr. Gray ; he alone can save us."

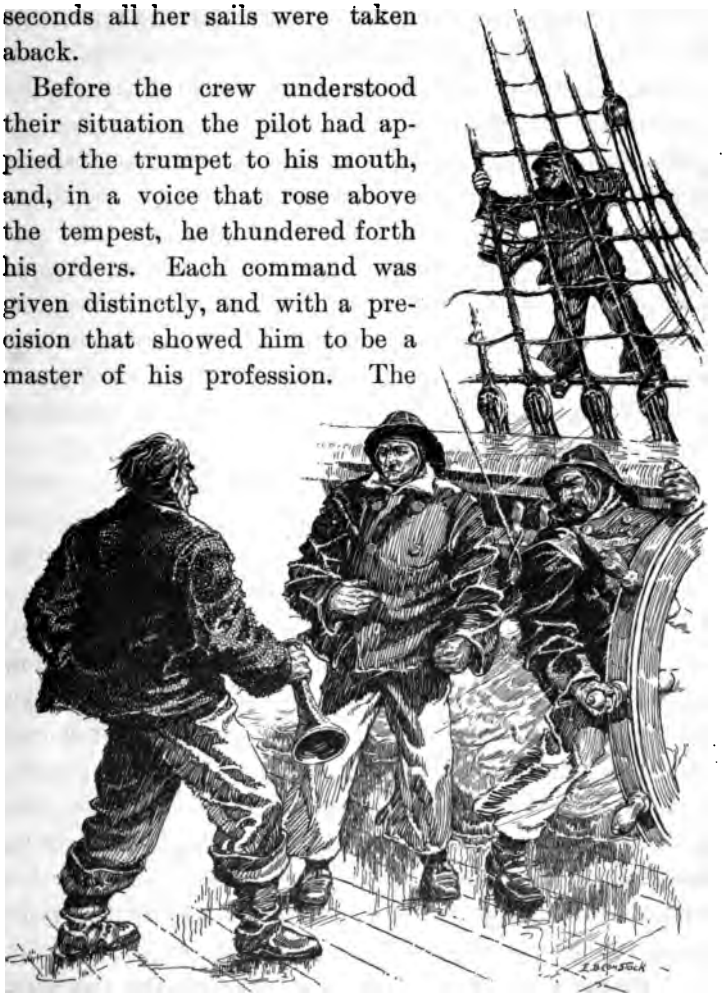
Griffith threw his speaking trumpet on the deck, and, as he walked proudly away, muttered, in bitterness of feeling : —

" Then all is lost, indeed ; and among the rest the foolish hopes with which I visited this coast."

There was, however, no time for reply ; the ship had

been rapidly running into the wind, and as the efforts of the crew were paralyzed by the contradictory orders they had heard, she gradually lost her way, and in a few seconds all her sails were taken aback.

Before the crew understood their situation the pilot had applied the trumpet to his mouth, and, in a voice that rose above the tempest, he thundered forth his orders. Each command was given distinctly, and with a precision that showed him to be a master of his profession. The



helm was kept fast, and the head yards swung up heavily against the wind, and the vessel was soon whirling round on her heel, with a retrograde movement.

Griffith was too much of a seaman not to perceive that the pilot had seized, with a perception almost intuitive, the only method that promised to extricate the vessel from her situation.

He was young, impetuous, and proud, but he was generous. Forgetting his resentment and his mortification, he rushed forward among the men, and by his presence and example added certainty to the experiment. The ship fell off slowly before the gale, and bowed her yards nearly to the water, as she felt the blast pouring its fury on her broadside, while the surly waves beat violently against her stern, as if in reproach at departing from her usual manner of moving.

When the ship had fallen off dead before the wind, her head sails were shaken, her after yards trimmed, and her helm shifted, before she had time to run upon the danger that had threatened as well to leeward as to windward. The beautiful fabric, obedient to her government, threw her bows up gracefully toward the wind again, and, as her sails were trimmed, moved out from among the dangerous shoals on which she had been embayed, as steadily and swiftly as she had approached them.

A moment of breathless astonishment succeeded the accomplishment of this nice maneuver, but there was no time for the usual expressions of surprise. The stranger still held the trumpet, and continued to lift his voice amid the howlings of the blast, whenever prudence or skill required any change in the management of the ship.

For an hour longer there was a fearful struggle for their preservation, the channel becoming at each step more complicated, and the shoals thickening around the mariners on every side. The lead was cast rapidly, and the quick eye of the pilot seemed to pierce the darkness with a keenness of vision that exceeded human power. It was apparent to all in the vessel that they were under the guidance of one who understood navigation thoroughly, and their exertions kept pace with their reviving confidence. Again and again the frigate appeared to be rushing blindly on the shoals where the sea was covered with foam, and where destruction would have been as sudden as it was certain, when the clear voice of the stranger was heard warning them of the danger, and inciting them to their duty. "Now is the pinch," said the pilot, "and if the ship behaves well we are safe; but if otherwise, all we have done will be useless."

The veteran seaman whom he addressed left the chains at this portentous notice, and, calling to his first lieutenant, required of the stranger an explanation of his warning.

"See you yon light on the southern headland?" returned the pilot; "you may know it from a star near it, by its sinking at times in the ocean. Now observe the hummock a little north of it, looking like a sea fog in the horizon; 'tis a hill far inland. If we keep that light open from the hill, we shall do well; but if not, we shall surely go to pieces."

"Gentlemen, we must be prompt," exclaimed the pilot; "we have but a mile to go, and the ship appears to fly. That topsail is not enough to keep her up to the wind; we want both jib and mainsail."

"'Tis a perilous thing to loosen canvas in such a tempest," observed the doubtful captain.

"It must be done," returned the collected stranger; "we perish without it. See, the light already touches the edge of the hummock. The sea casts to leeward."

"It shall be done," cried Griffith, seizing the trumpet from the hand of the pilot.

The orders of the lieutenant were executed as soon as issued; and, everything being ready, the enormous folds of the mainsail were trusted to the blast.

"She feels it! She springs her luff! Observe," cried the pilot, "the light opens from the hummock already. If she will only bear her canvas, we shall go clear."

A report like that of a cannon interrupted his exclamation, and something resembling a white cloud was seen drifting before the wind from the head of the ship, till it was driven into the gloom far to leeward.

"'Tis the jib, blown from the bolt ropes," said the commander of the frigate. "This is no time to spread light duck, but the mainsail may stand it yet."

"The sail would laugh at a tornado," returned the lieutenant; "but the mast springs like a piece of steel."

"Silence, all!" cried the pilot. "Now, gentlemen, we shall know our fate. Let her luff—luff you can."

This warning effectually closed all discourse; and the hardy mariners, knowing that they had done all in the power of man to insure their safety, stood in breathless anxiety awaiting the result. The pilot silently proceeded to the wheel, and with his own hands he undertook the steerage of the ship. Occasionally the fluttering of the sails would be heard; and when the looks of the startled

seamen were turned to the wheel, they beheld the stranger grasping the spokes, with his quick eye glancing from the water to the canvas. At length the ship reached a point where she appeared to be rushing directly into the jaws of destruction, when suddenly her course was changed, and her head receded rapidly from the wind. At the same instant the voice of the pilot was heard shouting: —

"Square away the yards! In mainsail!"

A general burst from the crew echoed, "Square away the yards!" and, quick as thought, the frigate was seen gliding along the channel before the wind. The eye had hardly time to dwell on the foam, which seemed like clouds driving in the heavens, and directly the gallant vessel issued from her perils, and rose and fell on the heavy waves of the sea.

The seamen were yet drawing long breaths, and gazing about them like men recovering from a trance, when Griffith approached the man who had so successfully conducted them through their perils. The lieutenant grasped the hand of the other, as he said: —

"You have this night proved yourself a faithful pilot, and such a seaman as the world cannot equal."

The pressure of the hand was warmly returned by the unknown mariner, who replied: —

"I am no stranger to the seas, and I may yet find my grave in them. But you, too, have deceived me; you have acted nobly, young man." Saying this, he walked away toward the commander.

Griffith gazed after him a moment in surprise; but, as his duty required his attention, other thoughts soon engaged his mind.

THE STAMPEDE

From "The Prairie"

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

THE warrior suddenly paused and bent his face aside, like one who listened with all his faculties absorbed in the act. Then turning the head of his horse, he rode to the nearest angle of the thicket, and looked intently across the bleak prairie in a direction opposite to the side on which the party stood. Returning slowly from this unaccountable, and, to his observers, startling procedure, he riveted his eyes on Inez, and paced back and forth several times with the air of one who maintained a warm struggle on some difficult point in the recesses of his own thoughts. He had drawn the reins of his impatient steed, and was seemingly about to speak, when his head again sank on his chest, and he resumed his former attitude of attention. Galloping like a deer to the place of his former observations, he rode for a moment swiftly, in short and rapid circles as if still uncertain of his course, and then darted away like a bird that had been fluttering around its nest before it takes a distant flight. After scouring the plain for a minute, he was lost to the eye behind a swell of the land.

The hounds, which had also manifested great uneasiness for some time, followed him for a little distance, and then terminated their chase by seating themselves on the ground and raising their usual low, whining and warning howls.

These movements had passed in so short a space of time that the old man, who neglected not to note the smallest incident, had no opportunity of expressing his

opinion concerning the stranger's motives. After the Pawnee had disappeared, however, he shook his head and muttered, while he walked slowly to the angle of the thicket that the Indian had just quitted: —

"There are both scents and sounds in the air, though my miserable senses are not good enough to hear the one or to catch the taint of the other."

"There is nothing to be seen," cried Middleton, who kept close at his side. "My ears and my eyes are good, and yet I can assure you that I neither hear nor see anything."

"Your eyes are good! And you are not deaf!" returned the other, with a slight air of contempt; "no, lad, no. They may be good to see across a church, or to hear a town bell, but afore you had passed a year in these prairies you would find yourself taking a turkey for a buffalo, or conceiting fifty times that the roar of a buffalo bull was the thunder of the Lord. There is a deception of natur' in these naked plains in which the air throws up the images like water, and then it is hard to tell the prairies from a sea. But yonder is a sign that a hunter never fails to know."

The trapper pointed to a flight of vultures that were sailing over the plain at no great distance, and apparently in the direction in which the Pawnee had riveted his eyes.

At first Middleton could not distinguish the small dark objects that were dotting the dusky clouds; but as they came swiftly onward, first their forms and then their heavy waving wings became distinctly visible.

"Listen!" said the trapper, when he had succeeded in

making Middleton see the moving column of birds. "Now you hear the buffaloes, or bisons, as your knowing doctor sees fit to call them; though buffaloes is their name among all the hunters of these regions. And I conclude that a hunter is a better judge of a beast and of its name," he added, winking at the young soldier, "than any man who has turned over the leaves of a book instead of traveling over the face of the 'arth, in order to find out the natur's of its inhabitants."

"Of their habits, I will grant you," cried the naturalist, who rarely missed an opportunity to agitate any disputed point in his favorite studies.

"That is, provided always deference is had to the proper use of definitions, and that they are contemplated with scientific eyes."

"Eyes of a mole! As if any man's eyes were not as good for names as the eyes of any other creatur'! Who named the works of His hand? Can you tell me that, with your book and college wisdom? Was it not the first man in the garden, and is it not a plain consequence that his children inherit his gifts?"

"That is certainly the Mosaic account of the event," said the doctor: "though your reading is by far too literal."

"My reading! Nay, if you suppose that I have wasted my time in schools, you do such a wrong to my knowledge as one mortal should never lay to the door of another without sufficient reason. If I have ever craved the art of reading, it has been that I might better know the sayings of the book you name; for it is a book which speaks in every line according to human feelings, and therein according to reason."

"And do you then believe," said the doctor, a little provoked by the dogmatism of his stubborn adversary, and perhaps secretly too confident in his own more liberal, though scarcely as profitable, attainments, "do you then believe that all these beasts were literally collected in a garden, to be enrolled in the nomenclature of the first man?" "Why not? I understand your meaning; for it is not needful to live in towns to hear all the devilish devices that the conceit of man can invent to upset his own happiness. What does it prove, except, indeed, it may be said to prove that the garden He made was not after the miserable fashions of our times, thereby directly giving the lie to what the world calls its civilizing? No, no; the garden of the Lord was the forest then, and is the forest now, where the fruits do grow and the birds do sing, according to His own wise ordering. Now, lady, you may see the mystery of the vultures. There come the buffaloes themselves, and a noble herd it is! I warrant me that Pawnee has a troop of his people in some of the hollows nigh by; and as he has gone scampering after them, you are about to see a glorious chase. It will serve to keep the squatter and his brood under cover, and for ourselves there is little reason to fear. A Pawnee is not apt to be a malicious savage."

Every eye was now drawn to the striking spectacle that succeeded. Even the timid Inez hastened to the side of Middleton to gaze at the sight, and Paul summoned Ellen from her culinary labors to become a witness of the lively scene.

Throughout the whole of those moving events which it has been our duty to record, the prairies had lain in the

majesty of perfect solitude. The heavens had been blackened with the passage of the migratory birds, it is true; but the dogs of the party and the ass of the doctor were the only quadrupeds that had enlivened the broad surface of the waste beneath. There was now a sudden exhibition of animal life which changed the scene, as it were by magic, to the very opposite extreme.

A few enormous bison bulls were first observed scouring along the most distant roll of the prairie, and then succeeded long files of single beasts, which in their turns were followed by a dark mass of bodies, until the dun colored herbage of the plain was entirely lost in the deeper hue of their shaggy coats. The herd, as the column spread and thickened, was like the endless flocks of the smaller birds whose extended flanks are so often seen to heave up out of the abyss of the heavens, until they appear as countless as the leaves in those forests over which they wing their endless flight. Clouds of dust shot up in little columns from the center of the mass, as some animal, more furious than the rest, plowed the plain with his horns; and from time to time a deep hollow bellowing was borne along on the wind, as if a thousand throats vented their plaints in a discordant murmuring.

A long and musing silence reigned in the party as they gazed on this spectacle of wild and peculiar grandeur. It was at length broken by the trapper, who, having been long accustomed to similar sights, felt less of its influence, or rather felt it in a less thrilling and absorbing manner, than those to whom the scene was more novel.

"There go ten thousand oxen in one drove, without keeper or master, except Him who made them and gave

them these open plains for their pasture. Ay, it is here that man may see the proofs of his wantonness and folly. Can the proudest governor in all the States go into his fields and slaughter a nobler bullock than is here offered to the meanest hand; and when he has gotten his sirloin or his steak, can he eat it with as good a relish as he who has sweetened his food with wholesome toil, and earned it according to the law of natur', by honestly mastering that which the Lord hath put before him?"

"If the prairie platter is smoking with a buffalo's hump, I answer no," interrupted the luxurious bee-hunter.

"Ay, boy, you have tasted, and you feel the genuine reasoning of the thing. But the herd is heading a little this way, and it behooves us to make ready for their visit. If we hide ourselves altogether, the horned brutes will break through the place and trample us beneath their feet like so many creeping worms; so we will just put the weak ones apart, and take post, as becomes men and hunters, in the van."

As there was but little time to make the necessary arrangements, the whole party set about them in good earnest. Inez and Ellen were placed in the edge of the thicket on the side furthest from the approaching herd. Asinus was posted in the center, in consideration of his nerves; then the old man with his three male companions divided themselves in such a manner as they thought would enable them to turn the head of the rushing column, should it chance to approach too nigh their position. By the vacillating movements of some fifty or a hundred bulls that led the advance, it remained questionable for many moments what course they intended to

pursue. But a tremendous and painful roar which came from behind the cloud of dust that rose in the center of the herd, and which was horridly answered by the screams of the carrion birds that were greedily sailing above the flying drove, appeared to give a new impulse to their flight and at once to remove every symptom of indecision. As if glad to seek the smallest signs of the forest, the whole of the affrighted herd became steady in its direction, rushing in a straight line toward the little cover of bushes which has already been so often named.

The appearance of danger was now in reality of a character to try the stoutest nerves. The flanks of the dark moving mass were advanced in such a manner as to make a concave line of the front; and every fierce eye that was glaring from the shaggy wilderness of hair in which the entire heads of the males were enveloped, was riveted with mad anxiety on the thicket. It seemed as if each beast strove to outstrip his neighbor in gaining this desired cover; and as thousands in the rear pressed blindly on those in front, there was the appearance of an imminent risk that the leaders of the herd would be precipitated on the concealed party, in which case the destruction of every one of them was certain. Each of our adventurers felt the danger of his situation in a manner peculiar to his individual character and circumstances.

Middleton wavered. At times he felt inclined to rush through the bushes, and seizing Inez, attempt to fly. Then recollecting the impossibility of outstripping the furious speed of an alarmed bison, he felt for his arms, determined to make head against the countless drove.

The faculties of Dr. Battius were quickly wrought up to the very summit of mental delusion. The dark forms of the herd lost their distinctness, and then the naturalist began to fancy he beheld a wild collection of all the creatures of the world rushing upon him in a body, as if to revenge the various injuries, which in the course of a life of indefatigable labor in behalf of the natural sciences, he had inflicted on their several genera. The paralysis it occasioned in his system was like the effect of the incubus. Equally unable to fly or to advance, he stood riveted to the spot, until the infatuation became so complete, that the worthy naturalist was beginning, by a desperate effort of scientific resolution, even to class the different specimens. On the other hand, Paul shouted and called on Ellen to come and assist him in shouting, but his voice was lost in the bellowings and trampling of the herd. Furious, and yet strangely excited by the obstinacy of the brutes and the wildness of the sight, and nearly maddened by sympathy and a species of unconscious apprehension in which the claims of nature were singularly mingled with concern for his mistress, he nearly split his throat in exhorting his aged friend to interfere.

"Come forth, old trapper," he shouted, "with your prairie inventions, or we shall all be smothered under a mountain of buffalo humps!"

The old man, who had stood all this while leaning on his rifle and regarding the movements of the herd with a steady eye, now deemed it time to strike his blow. Leveling his piece at the foremost bull, with an agility that would have done credit to his youth, he fired. The animal received the bullet on the matted hair between

his horns, and fell to his knees; but shaking his head, he instantly arose, the very shock seeming to increase his exertions. There was now no longer time to hesitate. Throwing down his rifle, the trapper stretched forth his arms, and advanced from the cover with naked hands directly toward the rushing column of the beasts.

The figure of a man, when sustained by the firmness and steadiness that only intellect can impart, rarely fails of commanding respect from all the inferior animals of the creation. The leading bulls recoiled, and for a single instant there was a sudden stop to their speed, a dense mass of bodies rolling up in front until hundreds were seen floundering and tumbling on the plain. Then came another of those hollow bellowings from the rear, and set the herd again in motion. The head of the column, how-

ever, divided, the immovable form of the trapper cutting it, as it were, into two gliding streams of life. Middleton and Paul instantly profited by his example, and extended the feeble barrier by a similar exhibition of their own persons.

For a few moments the new impulse given to the animals in front served to protect the thicket. But as the body of the herd pressed more and more upon the open line of its defenders, and the dust thickened so as to obscure their persons, there was at each instant a renewed danger of the beasts breaking through. It became necessary for the trapper and his companions to become still more and more alert; and they were gradually yielding before the headlong multitude, when a furious bull darted by Middleton so near as to brush his person, and at the next instant swept through the thicket with the velocity of the wind.

"Close, and die for the ground," shouted the old man, "or a thousand of the devils will be at his heels."

All their efforts would have proved fruitless, however, against the living torrent, had not Asinus, whose domains had just been so rudely entered, lifted his voice in the midst of the uproar. The most sturdy and furious of the bulls trembled at the alarming and unknown cry; and then each individual brute was seen madly pressing from that very thicket, which the moment before he had endeavored to reach, with the eagerness with which the murderer seeks the sanctuary.

As the stream divided, the place became clear; the two dark columns moving obliquely from the copse, to unite again at the distance of a mile, on its opposite side. The

instant the old man saw the sudden effect which the voice of Asinus had produced, he coolly commenced reloading his rifle, indulging at the same time in a heartfelt fit of his silent and peculiar merriment.

"There they go, like dogs with so many half-filled shot pouches dangling at their tails, and no fear of their breaking their order; for what the brutes in the rear didn't hear with their own ears, they'll conceit they did; besides, if they change their minds, it may be no hard matter to get the jack to sing the rest of his tune."

"The ass has spoken, but Balaam is silent!" cried the bee-hunter, catching his breath after a repeated burst of noisy mirth, that might possibly have added to the panic of the buffaloes by its vociferation. "The man is as completely dumfounded as if a swarm of young bees had settled on the end of his tongue, and he not willing to speak for fear of their answer."

"How now, friend," continued the trapper, addressing the still motionless and entranced naturalist; "how now, friend? Are you, who make your livelihood by booking the names and natur's of the beasts of the fields and the fowls of the air, frightened at a herd of scampering buffaloes? Though perhaps you are ready to dispute my right to call them by a word that is in the mouth of every hunter and trader on the frontier."

The old man was, however, mistaken in supposing he could excite the benumbed faculties of the Doctor by provoking a discussion. From that time henceforth he was never known, except on one occasion, to utter a word that indicated either the species or the genus of the animal. He obstinately refused the nutritious food of the whole

ox family; and even to the present hour, now that he is established in all the scientific dignity and security of a savant in one of the maritime towns, he turns his back with a shudder on those delicious and unrivaled viands that are so often seen at the suppers of the craft, and which are unequaled by anything that is served under the same name at boasted chophouses of London, or at the most renowned of the Parisian restaurants.

THE DEATH OF THE SAVAGE

From "The Deerslayer"

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

BY this time the piece was reloaded, and Deerslayer, after tossing the tomahawk into the canoe, advanced to his victim, and stood over him, leaning on his rifle, in melancholy attention. It was the first instance in which he had seen a man fall in battle. It was the first fellow-creature against whom he had ever seriously raised his own hand. The sensations were novel; and regret, with the freshness of our better feelings, mingled with his triumph. The Indian was not dead, though shot directly through the body. He lay on his back motionless, but his eyes, now full of consciousness, watched each action of his victor — as the fallen bird regards the fowler — jealous of every movement. The man probably expected the fatal blow which was to precede the loss of his scalp; or perhaps he anticipated that this latter act of cruelty would precede his death. Deerslayer read his thoughts;

and he found a melancholy satisfaction in relieving the apprehensions of the helpless savage.

"No, no, redskin," he said; "you've nothing more to fear from me. I am of a Christian stock, and scalping is not of my gifts. I'll just make sartain of your rifle, and then come back and do you what sarvice I can. Though here I can't stay much longer, as the crack of three rifles will be apt to bring some of your devils down upon me."

The close of this was said in a sort of soliloquy, as the young man went in quest of the fallen rifle. The piece was found where its owner had dropped it, and was immediately put into the canoe. Laying his own rifle at its side, Deerslayer then returned and stood over the Indian again.

"All inmity atween you and me's at an ind, redskin," he said; "and you may set your heart at rest on the score of the scalp, or any further injury. My gifts are white, as I've told you; and I hope my conduct will be white also."

Could looks have conveyed all they meant, it is probable Deerslayer's innocent vanity on the subject of color would have been rebuked a little; but he comprehended the gratitude that was expressed in the eyes of the dying savage, without in the least detecting the bitter sarcasm that struggled with the better feeling.

"Water!" ejaculated the thirsty and unfortunate creature; "give poor Injin water."

"Ay, water you shall have, if you drink the lake dry. I'll just carry you down to it, that you may take your fill. This is the way, they tell me, with all wounded people — water is their greatest comfort and delight."

So saying, Deerslayer raised the Indian in his arms, and carried him to the lake. Here he first helped him to take an attitude in which he could appease his burning thirst; after which he seated himself on a stone, and took

the head of his wounded adversary in his own lap, and endeavored to soothe his anguish in the best manner he could.

"It would be sinful in me to tell you your time hadn't come, warrior," he commenced, "and, therefore, I'll not say it. You've passed the middle age already, and, considerin' the sort of lives ye lead, your days have been pretty well filled. The principal thing now is to look forward to what comes next. Neither redskin nor paleface on the whole, calculates much on sleepin' forever; but both expect to live in another world. Each has his gifts, and will be judged by 'em, and, I suppose, you've thought these matters over enough, not to stand in need

of sarmons when the trial comes. You'll find your happy hunting grounds, if you've been a just Injin; if an onjust, you'll meet your desarts in another way. I've my own idees about these things, but you're too old and exper'enced to need any explanations from one as young as I."

"Good!" ejaculated the Indian, whose voice retained its depth even as life ebbed away; "young head — ole wisdom."

"It's sometimes a consolation when the ind comes, to know that them we've harmed, or tried to harm, forgive us. I suppose natur' seeks this relief by way of getting a pardon on 'arth; as we never can know whether He pardons, who is all in all, till judgment itself comes. It's soothing to know that any pardon at such times, and that, I conclude, is the secret. Now, as for myself, I overlook altogether your designs ag'in my life: first, because no harm came of 'em; next, because it's your gifts, and natur', and trainin', and I ought not to have trusted you at all; and, finally and chiefly, because I can bear no ill will to a dying man, whether heathen or Christian. So put your heart at ease, so far as I'm consarned; you know best what other matters ought to trouble you, or what ought to give you satisfaction in so trying a moment."

It is probable that the Indian had some of the fearful glimpses of the unknown state of being which God in mercy seems at times to afford to all the human race; but they were necessarily in conformity with his habits and prejudices. Like most of his people, and like too many of our own, he thought more of dying in a way to gain applause among those he left, than to secure a better state of existence hereafter. While Deerslayer was speak-

ing his mind was a little bewildered, though he felt that the intention was good; and when he had done, a regret passed over his spirit that none of his own tribe were present to witness his stoicism, under extreme bodily suffering, and the firmness with which he met his end. With the high innate courtesy that so often distinguishes the Indian warrior before he becomes corrupted by too much intercourse with the worst class of the white men, he endeavored to express his thankfulness for the other's good intentions, and to let him understand that they were appreciated.

"Good!" he repeated, for this was an English word much used by the savages — "good — young head; young heart, too. Old heart tough; no shed tear. Hear Indian when he die, and no want to lie — what he call him?"

"Deerslayer is the name I bear now, though the Delawares have said that when I get back from this warpath, I shall have a more manly title provided I can 'arn one."

"That good name for boy — poor name for warrior. He get better quick! No fear there" — the savage had strength sufficient, under the strong excitement he felt, to raise a hand and tap the young man on his breast — "eye sartain — finger, lightning — aim, death — great warrior soon. No Deerslayer — Hawkeye — Hawkeye — Hawkeye. Shake hand."

Deerslayer — or Hawkeye, as the youth was then first named, for in after years he bore the appellation throughout all that region — Deerslayer took the hand of the savage, whose last breath was drawn in that attitude, gazing in admiration at the countenance of a stranger who had shown so much readiness, skill, and firmness, in a scene

that was equally trying and novel. When the reader remembers it is the highest gratification an Indian can receive to see his enemy betray weakness, he will be better able to appreciate the conduct which had extorted so great a concession at such a moment.

"His spirit has fled!" said Deerslayer, in a suppressed, melancholy voice. "Ah's me! Well, to this we must all come, sooner or later; and he is happiest, let his skin be of what color it may, who is best fitted to meet it. Here lies the body of no doubt a brave warrior, and the soul is already flying toward its heaven or hell, whether that be a happy hunting ground or a place scant of game; regions of glory, according to Moravian doctrine, or flames of fire! So it happens, too, as regards other matters! Here have old Hutter and Hurry Harry got themselves into difficulty, if they haven't got themselves into torment and death, and all for a bounty that luck offers to me in what many would think a lawful and suitable manner. But not a farthing of such money shall cross my hand. White I was born, and white will I die; clinging to color to the last, even though the king's Majesty, his governors, and all his councils, both at home and in the Colonies, forget from what they come, and where they hope to go, and all for a little advantage in warfare. No, no — warrior, hand of mine shall never molest your scalp, and so your soul may rest in peace on the p'int of making a decent appearance when the body comes to join it in your own land of spirits."

Deerslayer arose as soon as he had spoken. Then he placed the body of the dead man in a sitting posture, with its back against the little rock, taking the necessary care

to prevent it from falling or in any way settling into an attitude that might be thought unseemly by the sensitive though wild notions of a savage. When this duty was performed, the young man stood gazing at the grim countenance of his fallen foe, in a sort of melancholy abstraction.

BOYS WANTED

ANONYMOUS

BOYS of spirit, boys of will,
Boys of muscle, brain, and power,
Fit to cope with anything —
These are wanted every hour.

Not the weak and whining drones,
That all trouble magnify —
Not the watchword of "I can't,"
But the nobler one, "I'll try."

Do whate'er you have to do
With a true and earnest zeal;
Bend your sinews to the task —
Put your shoulders to the wheel.

Though your duty may be hard,
Look not on it as an ill;
If it be an honest task,
Do it with an honest will.

At the anvil, or the farm,
Wheresoever you may be,
From your future efforts, boys,
Comes a nation's destiny.

WHAT?

KATE PUTNAM OSGOOD

WHAT was it that Charlie saw to-day,
Down in the pool where the cattle lie?
A shoal of spotted trout at play?
Or a sheeny dragon fly?

The fly and the fish were there indeed;
But as for the puzzle, — guess again!
It was neither a shell, nor flower, nor reed,
Nor the nest of a last year's wren.

Some willows droop to the brooklet's bed; —
Who knows but a bee has fallen down?
Or a spider, swung from his broken thread,
Was learning the way to drown?

You have not read me the riddle yet.
Not even the wing of a wounded bee,
Nor the web of a spider, torn and wet,
Did Charlie this morning see.

Now, answer, you who have grown so wise, —
What could the wonderful sight have been,
But the dimpled face and great blue eyes
Of the rogue who was looking in?

THE NIGHT WIND

EUGENE FIELD

HAVE you ever heard the wind go "Yoooo"?
'Tis a pitiful sound to hear!
It seems to chill you through and through
With a strange and speechless fear.
'Tis the voice of the night that broods outside
When folks should be asleep,
And many and many's the time I've cried
To the darkness brooding far and wide
Over the land and the deep:
"Whom do you want, O lonely night,
That you wail the long hours through?"
And the night would say in its ghostly way:
"Yooooooooo!
Yooooooooo!
Yooooooooo!"

My mother told me long ago
(When I was a little lad)
That when the wind went wailing so
Somebody had been bad;
And then, when I was snug in bed,
Whither I had been sent,
With blankets pulled up round my head,
I'd think of what my mother'd said,
And wonder what boy she meant!
And "Who's been bad to-day?" I'd ask
Of the wind that hoarsely blew,
And the voice would say in its meaningful way:

"Yoooooooo!
Yoooooooo!
Yoooooooo!"

That this was true I must allow —
You'll not believe it though!
Yes, though I'm quite a model now,
I was not always so.
And if you doubt what things I say,
Suppose you make the test;
Suppose when you've been bad some day
And up to bed are sent away
From mother and the rest —
Suppose you ask, "Who has been bad?"
And then you'll hear what's true;
For the wind will moan in its ruefulest tone:
"Yoooooooo!
Yoooooooo!
Yoooooooo!"

From "Love Songs of Childhood," Copyright, 1894. By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

JACK FROST

HANNAH F. GOULD

Hannah Flagg Gould was an American poet born in 1789. But little of what she wrote has survived.

THE Frost looked forth on a still clear night,
And whispered, "Now, I shall be out of sight;
So, through the valley, and over the height,

In silence I'll take my way.
I will not go on that blustering train,
The wind and the snow, the hail and the rain,
That make such a bustle and noise in vain;
But I'll be as busy as they!"

So he flew to the mountain, and powdered its crest,
He lit on the trees, and their boughs he dressed
With diamonds and pearls; and over the breast
Of the quivering lake, he spread
A coat of mail, that it need not fear
The glittering point of many a spear
Which he hung on its margin, far and near,
Where a rock could rear its head.

He went to the window of those who slept,
And over each pane like a fairy crept:
Wherever he breathed, wherever he stepped,
By the light of the morn were seen
Most beautiful things! — There were flowers and trees,
There were bevies of birds, and swarms of bees;
There were cities and temples and towers; and these
All pictured in silvery sheen!

But he did one thing that was hardly fair —
He peeped in the cupboard: and finding there
That all had forgotten for him to prepare,
"Now, just to set them a-thinking,
I'll bite this basket of fruit," said he,
"This costly pitcher I'll burst in three!
And the glass of water they've left for me
Shall 'tchick' to tell them I'm drinking."

A THANKSGIVING FABLE

OLIVER HERFORD

IT was a hungry pussy cat, upon Thanksgiving morn,
And she watched a thankful little mouse, that ate an ear of corn.
"If I ate that thankful little mouse, how thankful he should be,
When he has made a meal himself, to make a meal for me!

"Then with his thanks for having fed, and his thanks for feeding me,
With all *his* thankfulness inside, how thankful I shall be!"
Thus mused the hungry pussy cat, upon Thanksgiving Day;
But the little mouse had overheard and declined (with thanks) to stay.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

With young people Longfellow is probably the most popular of all the American poets. His thought is simple, and the rhythm of his poems almost perfect. Among the most popular of his longer works are "Evangeline," "Miles Standish," "Tales of a Wayside Inn," "Hiawatha," "The Golden Legend," and the "Building of the Ship." Many of his shorter poems are very popular, and are found in almost every collection of verse. Among these are "Resignation," "The Skeleton in Armor," "The Old Clock on the Stair," "The Psalm of Life," "Excelsior," "The Wreck of the Hesperus," "The Bridge," "The Reaper and the Flowers," "The Builders," "Sandalphon," and "Haunted Houses."

UNDER a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from the threshing floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,

He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

IT was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;

And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spoke an old Sailor
Had sailed the Spanish Main,
"I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain,
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! Come hither! my little daughter
And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale,
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church bells ring,
O say, what may it be?"
"'Tis a fog bell on a rock bound coast!" —
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be?"
But her father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That saved she might be;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave
On the lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
  Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
  Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
  A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf,
  On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
  She drifted a dreary wreck.
And a whooping billow swept the crew
  Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
  Looked soft as carded wool;
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
  Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho! Ho! The breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations
That is known as the children's hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine.

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
  Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
  And molder in dust away.

THE FOUNTAIN

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

INTO the sunshine,
  Full of the light,
Leaping and flashing
  From morn till night!

Into the moonlight,
  Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower-like
  When the winds blow!

Into the starlight,
  Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
  Happy by day;

Ever in motion,
  Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
  Never aweary;

Glad of all weathers;
  Still seeming best,
Upward or downward;
  Motion thy rest;

Full of a nature
  Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment,
  Ever the same;

Ceaseless aspiring,
  Ceaseless content,
Darkness or sunshine
  Thy element;

Glorious fountain!
  Let my heart be
Fresh, changeful, constant,
  Upward like thee!

THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SQUIRREL

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THE Mountain and the Squirrel
  Had a quarrel,
The former called the latter
"Little Prig."
Bun replied:
"You are doubtless very big!
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together
To make up a year;
And a sphere;
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.

If I'm not so large as you,
You're not so small as I,
And not half so spry;
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track.
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

THE CRICKET

WILLIAM COWPER

LITTLE inmate, full of mirth,
Chirping on my kitchen hearth,
Wheresoe'er be thine abode,
Always harbinger of good,
Pay me for thy warm retreat
With a song more soft and sweet;
In return thou shalt receive
Such a strain as I can give.

Neither night nor dawn of day
Puts a period to thy play!
Sing, then, and extend thy span
Far beyond the date of man.
Wretched man, whose years are spent
In repining discontent,
Lives not, aged though he be,
Half a span compared with thee.

HOW THE CRICKETS BROUGHT GOOD FORTUNE

P. J. STAHL

MY friend Jacques went into a baker's shop one day to buy a little cake which he had fancied in passing. He intended it for a child whose appetite was gone, and who could be coaxed to eat only by amusing him. He thought that such a pretty loaf might tempt even the sick. While he waited for his change, a little boy six or eight years old, in poor, but perfectly clean, clothes, entered the baker's shop. "Ma'am," said he to the baker's wife, "mother sent me for a loaf of bread." The woman climbed upon the counter (this happened in a country town,) took from the shelf of four-pound loaves the best one she could find, and put it into the arms of the little boy.

My friend Jacques then first observed the thin and thoughtful face of the little fellow. It contrasted strongly with the round, open countenance of the great loaf, of which he was taking the greatest care.

"Have you any money?" said the baker's wife. The little boy's eyes grew sad.

"No, ma'am," said he, hugging the loaf closer to his thin blouse; "but mother told me to say that she would come and speak to you about it to-morrow."

"Run along," said the good woman; "carry your bread home, child."

"Thank you, ma'am," said the poor little fellow.

My friend Jacques came forward for his money. He had put his purchase into his pocket, and was about to go, when he found the child with the big loaf, whom he had supposed to be halfway home, standing stock still behind him.

"What are you doing there?" said the baker's wife to the child, whom she also thought to be fairly off. "Don't you like the bread?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am," said the child.

"Well, then, carry it home to your mother, my little friend. If you wait any longer, she will think you are playing by the way, and you will get a scolding."

The child did not seem to hear. Something else absorbed his attention.

The baker's wife went up to him, and gave him a friendly tap on the shoulder. "What are you thinking about?" said she.

"Ma'am," said the little boy, "what is it that sings?"

"There is no singing," said she.

"Yes!" cried the little fellow. "Hear it! Queek, queek, queek, queek!"

My friend and the woman both listened, but they could hear nothing, unless it was the song of the crickets, frequent guests in bakers' houses.

"It is a little bird," said the dear little fellow; "or perhaps the bread sings when it bakes, as apples do."

"No, indeed, little goosey!" said the baker's wife; "those are crickets. They sing in the bakehouse because we are lighting the oven, and they like to see the fire."

"Crickets!" said the child; "are they really crickets?"

"Yes, to be sure," she said good-humoredly. The child's face lighted up.

"Ma'am," said he, blushing at the boldness of his request, "I would like it very much if you would give me a cricket."

"A cricket!" said the baker's wife, smiling; "what in the world would you do with a cricket, my little friend? I would gladly give you all there are in the house, to get rid of them, they run about so."

"O ma'am, give me one, only one, if you please!" said the child, clasping his little thin hands under the big loaf. "They say that crickets bring good luck into houses; and perhaps if we had one at home, mother, who has so much trouble, wouldn't cry any more."

"Why does your poor mamma cry?" said my friend, who could no longer help joining in the conversation.

"On account of her bills, sir," said the little fellow. "Father is dead, and mother works very hard, but she cannot pay them all."

My friend took the child, and with him the great loaf, into his arms, and I really believe he kissed them both. Meanwhile the baker's wife, who did not dare touch a cricket herself, had gone into the bakehouse. She made her husband catch four, and put them into a box with holes in the cover, so that they might breathe. She gave the box to the child, who went away perfectly happy.

When he had gone, the baker's wife and my friend gave each other a good squeeze of the hand. "Poor little fellow!" said they both together. Then she took down her account book, and finding the page where the mother's charges were written, made a great dash all down the page, and then wrote at the bottom, "Paid."

Meanwhile my friend, to lose no time, had put up in paper all the money in his pockets, where fortunately he had quite a sum that day, and had begged the good wife to send it at once to the mother of the little cricket-boy, with her bill receipted, and a note, in which he told her she had a son who would one day be her joy and pride.

They gave it to a baker's boy with long legs, and told him to make haste. The child, with his big loaf, his four crickets, and his little short legs, could not run very fast, so that when he reached home, he found his mother, for the first time in many weeks, with her eyes raised from her work, and a smile of peace and happiness upon her lips.

The boy believed that it was the arrival of his four little black things which had worked this miracle, and I do not think he was mistaken. Without the crickets, and his good little heart, would this happy change have taken place in his mother's fortunes?

THE WIND AND THE MOON

GEORGE MACDONALD

SAID the Wind to the Moon, "I will blow you out:
You stare
In the air
Like a ghost in a chair,
Always looking what I am about —
I hate to be watched; I'll blow you out."

The Wind blew hard, and out went the Moon.
So, deep
On a heap
Of clouds to sleep,
Down lay the Wind, and slumbered soon,
Muttering low, "I've done for that Moon."

He turned in his bed; she was there again!
On high
In the sky,
With her one ghost eye,
The Moon shone white and alive and plain.
Said the Wind, "I will blow you out again."

The Wind blew hard, and the Moon grew dim.
"With my sledge,

And my wedge,
I have knocked off her edge!
If I only blow right fierce and grim,
The creature will soon be dimmer than dim."

He blew and he blew, and she thinned to a thread.
"One puff
More's enough
To blow her to snuff!
One good puff more where the last was bred,
And glimmer, and glimmer, glum will go the thread."

He blew a great blast, and the thread was gone.
In the air
Nowhere
Was a moonbeam bare;
Far off and harmless the shy stars shone —
Sure and certain the moon was gone!

The Wind he took to his revels once more;
On down
In town,
Like a merry-mad clown,
He leaped and hallooed with whistle and roar —
"What's that?" The glimmering thread once more!

He flew in a rage — he danced and blew;
But in vain
Was the pain
Of his bursting brain;
For still the broader the Moon-scrap grew,
The broader he swelled his big cheeks and blew.

Slowly she grew till she filled the night,
And shone
On her throne
In the sky alone,
A matchless, wonderful silvery light,
Radiant and lovely, the Queen of the Night.

Said the Wind: "What a marvel of power am I!
With my breath,
Good faith!
I blew her to death —
First blew her away right out of the sky —
Then blew her in again; what strength have I!"

But the Moon she knew nothing about the affair;
For high
In the sky,
With her one white eye,
Motionless, miles above in the air,
She had never heard the great Wind blare.

SWEET AND LOW

ALFRED TENNYSON

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me:
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west,
Under the silver moon;
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

SUSY'S DRAGON

NORA PERRY

IT was after school, and Susy sat in one of the great windows of the library, writing out her French exercises. It was evidently dull work for her, for she yawned and fidgeted and sighed in a very restless manner; and every now and then she would stop in the midst of a line and watch the boys playing at marbles on the sidewalk.

There was little Kit and Jimmy Grant; what good times they did have! Oh dear! She wished she were a boy, and was playing marbles on the sidewalk, instead of toiling at these tiresome French exercises. Nobody had to study as hard as she did, she was sure. There was Tom, now, flying his kite an hour ago; and there — yes, there was Fanny Hamlin going after trailing arbutus, as true as the world! This was too great a temptation. Down went the exercises, and up went the window in a breath. "O Fanny! Fanny! Are you going after trailing arbutus?"

Yes, Fanny was going after trailing arbutus, and she wished Susy would come with her. Why couldn't she? Susy asked herself the very question, and came to the conclusion that there was really no sufficient reason why she couldn't. "Because I can write out the rest of my exercises to-morrow morning," she thought.

"I'm just going for a walk to Pine Woods," she said to Aunt Cathy, who had charge of Susy and her brothers since their mother's death. Aunt Cathy lifted her kind but penetrating gaze to Susy's face, and Susy felt uncomfortable, though all her aunt said in reply was, "Very well, my dear, you know best whether you can spare the time."

This was always Aunt Cathy's way. She said a sensible girl of thirteen, like Susy, should be taught to depend upon her own judgment in matters of this kind. Susy was the one who went to school; Susy was the one who had lessons to learn; then Susy was the only one who could tell when these school duties were over, and whether her lessons were learned. And if Susy wasn't faithful to her duty, then she must suffer the penalty. She was a baby no longer, to be governed blindly; she must learn to govern herself; it would teach her to know herself a great deal better, and to be self-reliant.

Susy liked Aunt Cathy's "way," but she always knew when Aunt Cathy thought she had neglected anything, and it always made her feel very uneasy, as people do when they abuse the trust reposed in them. And now this lovely spring afternoon, searching for arbutus with Fanny Hamlin, there was this shadow of uneasiness, of something unfulfilled, which clouded the bright day, and made the pleasure half a pain. But they were very successful in their hunt for flowers. Susy had never carried home such a big basketful, and dear Aunt Cathy admired them to her heart's content.

"But you look tired, Susy," she said to her.

"Yes, we went farther than we meant to at the start; why, we went almost to Long Roads, Aunt Cathy."

"Which is almost three miles. I should think you'd be tired, Susy. Now I should advise you, my dear, to eat your supper at once and go to bed."

And Susy was sensible enough to take this advice, for she remembered what she had to do in the morning, and if she *should* oversleep the time!

"Will you call me when you get up, Bridget?" she asked of the cook, when she went up stairs.

"Shure, it's not at five o'clock you'd be wanting to rise?" exclaimed Bridget, in astonishment.

"But I do, Bridget, and I want you to call me."

"Oh, well, I can do that aisy, miss; but it'll not be so aisy for you to mind it," Bridget replied in her dry way; "for shure," she said to Kitty Malony, the chambermaid, "haven't I tried her at this calling before, and didn't she always fail at the minding!"

It didn't seem more than an hour to Susy when she heard Bridget calling at the door, "Come, Miss Susy, it's five o'clock, and you remimber you wanted me to call yer."

"Yes, Bridget, I hear," she answered; "and I'm going to get right up," which she certainly meant to do. But it was so early, so long before nine o'clock, she would lie just a minute; and that was the last she remembered until a great thumping at her door broke into a morning dream.

It was her brother Tom. "Come, Sue," he shouted, "aren't you ever going to get up? It's breakfast time, and Bridget says she woke you up hours ago. Come, hurry up! I want you to see me fly my new kite. I bought it of Sam Green yesterday; it's the tallest kite you ever saw."

Susy was horrified at one part of Tom's communication. Breakfast time! How *could* she have slept so long? Only an hour to school time, — and those exercises! Was there ever such an unlucky girl? "Do go away, Tom," she said petulantly to her brother, as she hurried into the

library after a hasty breakfast. "I can't attend to your kite now; I'm in a hurry."

Tom flung out of the room in disgust. "I never saw such a girl in my life as you are, Sue. You're always in a hurry, and you never get out of it."

There was no time given her to reply to this assertion, for Tom had banged the door, and was halfway down the avenue in a minute. Then what could she have replied? When the truth is told us, however unpleasantly, what is there for us to say?

But the fact was, at present Susy didn't think much about the saying; it was the doing that occupied her. Here were two pages yet to translate! She set to work now in good earnest, but, of necessity, it had to be very hurried work; and Susy was never a ready translator at best.

She was always a little uncertain with those perplexing verbs and pronouns. There was one rule she had to repeat to herself over and over again, "*Ne* before the verb, and *pas* after it." She had no time this morning to go back and correct mistakes, however; for there rang the quarter bell, and she was only at that moment at the foot of the page.

"Dear me," she sighed, "if I get another tardy mark, or even an imperfect one, Miss Hill will change my seat, I know.

"Everything has gone wrong this week. I suppose it's what Cousin Bella calls a Fate."

Poor Susy! She got both, — the tardy mark and the imperfect one; for that French lesson was an awful boggle.

"What does ail you, Susy?" said Miss Hill, as Mademoiselle Le Brun reported her angrily.

"She has de grand talent, but she is not attenteev!" cried mademoiselle, in her broken English and her little shrill, impatient voice.

"I am afraid that is it, Susy," said Miss Hill, kindly.

Susy burst into tears. A dim consciousness was stealing over her, that the "everything going wrong" wasn't Fate exactly.

Her eyes were so red from these tears when she went home that Aunt Cathy asked the same question Miss Hill had asked, but with a different solicitude, "What does ail you, Susy?"

Then Susy told her troubles; how she had missed yesterday in her geography, and to-day in her French, how she had been marked tardy just for being a second behind the last bell ringing; and then the dreaded result of all, — losing her seat beside Fanny Hamlin.

Aunt Cathy heard her gently and patiently, but at the end she did not say much; she felt sure that Susy was finding out for herself the cause of these troubles, and she thought this would be better for her in the end than to have her fault held up before her by somebody else. That time, at least, Susy was on her guard. She took her history lesson into a little back room, where she could neither see the boys playing at marbles, nor Tom flying his kite, nor Fanny Hamlin if she passed; and then she put her mind upon her task, and was astonished to find that, by this steady, uninterrupted application, she had accomplished in an hour what she had many a time spent three hours over.

When she went downstairs, Tom was crossing the hall whistling one of his favorite negro melodies; and, remembering her ungraciousness of the morning, she said to him, "I want to see your new kite, Tom."

"Oh, you're over your hurry, are you? Well, the new kite's gone to bed for to-day,— you'll have to wait till to-morrow;" and away he went towards the parlor, looking rather "huffy" and injured still.

Susy followed him, and found Aunt Cathy reading aloud to little Kit. It was a pleasant story, and Aunt Cathy was a pleasant reader; and after the reading, which both Susy and Tom had enjoyed as much as little Kit, they all began looking over the engravings in the book; and here Susy came across a picture of St. George and the Dragon. "Who was St. George, Aunt Cathy?" she asked.

"St. George? Oh, he was a saint or hero, whose story belongs to the age of the Crusades. The Crusaders, you know, were those who fought in what are called 'The Holy Wars' for the conquest of Palestine. Palestine, you see, was in the hands of unbelievers, and the Christians were horrified that the land where Jesus had lived and taught and died should be in such possession; so for years they disputed this possession by fighting these battles.

"The legend of St. George is that he was a renowned prince, whose greatest achievement was the slaying of an enormous dragon, by which exploit he effected the deliverance from bondage of Aja, the daughter of a king. His story and character were so popular with the ancient Christians, that they bore the representation of the knight

upon their standards. And at this day the badge of the famous Order of the Knights of the Garter, in England, is the image of St. George.

"To every one now it is a symbol of victory of some kind, — the victory gained over a weakness or a sin; for we all of us have some weakness or sin which is a dragon for us to fight.

"Thackeray, the great novelist, whom your father admires so much, said he had not one dragon, but two, and that they were Indolence and Luxury; and he said it in connection with this picture of St. George, which had just been given him, and which he declared he should hang at the head of his bed, where he could see it every morning."

As Aunt Cathy concluded, Susy's face grew very grave and earnest, and, bending over the picture of St. George, she looked at it a long time in silence; but it was not until she was alone with Aunt Cathy that she spoke what was in her mind.

The boys had both gone to bed, and she still held the picture before her, regarding it with great interest, when she said: —

"Aunt Cathy, I've found out my dragon. It is that long word beginning with P that little Kit was trying to spell the other day; and it means to keep putting everything off till another time that ought to be done right away."

"I know. Procrastination, — that is the word, Susy."

"Yes, that is it; that is my dragon, and it's been the cause of all my troubles, Aunt Cathy. Now I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to ask father if he will let me have this picture cut out and framed, and I'll hang it at the foot of my bed, and try to remember, when I look at it, that I've got a battle to fight every day; for I have, Aunt Cathy.

"Oh, you don't know what hard work it is for me to sit and study. If it isn't one thing, it is another that makes my mind wander.

"Sometimes it's little Kit at his marbles, or the school girls passing, or what people are saying; and then at the end of an hour I don't know a word of my lesson, and the tea bell will ring, or somebody'll call for me to go somewhere, and I'll think, 'Oh, well, I can get the lesson to-morrow.'

"And then when to-morrow comes, all sorts of things

will happen, so there won't be a scrap of time; and that's the way the dragon has gone on beating me, ever and ever so long; and I don't know how, Aunt Cathy, but — but he always will." And here Susy began to choke a little; the next moment she burst out bravely, in a determined voice, "But I shall try real hard to beat him, anyway!"

"That's it, Susy!" Aunt Cathy exclaimed. "Try real hard; it's all anybody can do; and in trying I know you will win the battle, my dear."

And Susy was true to her word. She did try "real hard," and at last she won the battle.

IN APRIL

ELIZABETH AKERS

THE poplar drops beside the way
Its tasseled plumes of silver gray;
The chestnut pouts its great brown buds
Impatient for the laggard May.

The honeysuckles lace the wall,
The hyacinths grow fair and tall;
And mellow sun and pleasant wind
And odorous bees are over all.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE GLOWWORM

WILLIAM COWPER

A NIGHTINGALE that all day long
Had cheered the village with his song,
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,
Nor yet when eventide was ended,
Began to feel, as well he might,
The keen demands of appetite;
When looking eagerly around,
He spied far off, upon the ground,
A something shining in the dark,
And knew the glowworm by his spark;
So, stooping down from hawthorn top,
He thought to put him in his crop.

The worm, aware of his intent,
Harangued him thus, right eloquent:
"Did you admire my lamp," quoth he,
"As much as I your minstrelsy,
You would abhor to do me wrong,
As much as I to spoil your song:
For 'twas the self-same Power Divine
Taught you to sing, and me to shine;
That you with music, I with light,
Might beautify and cheer the night."

The songster heard this short oration,
And warbling out his approbation,
Released him, as my story tells,
And found a supper somewhere else.

LUCY GRAY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew.
She dwelt on a wide moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door.

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night —
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, child, to light
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father! will I gladly do:
'Tis scarcely afternoon —
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!"

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapped a fagot-band;
He plied his work; and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe;
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time;
She wandered up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept, and, turning homeward, cried,
"In heaven we all shall meet;"
When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downward from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone wall;

And then an open field they crossed:
The marks were still the same;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
  Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank;
  And further there were none!

Yet some maintain that to this day
  She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
  Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
  And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
  That whistles in the wind.

HUNTING SONG

WALTER SCOTT

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
  On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting spear!
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
  "Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Springlets in the dawn are streaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;

And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the greensward haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd,
You shall see him brought to bay.
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!

Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman, who can balk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk?
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

JACK IN THE PULPIT

ANONYMOUS

JACK in the pulpit
Preaches to-day,
Under the green trees
Just over the way.
Squirrel and song sparrow
High on their perch,
Hear the sweet lilybells
Ringing to church.
Come, hear what his reverence
Rises to say
In his low painted pulpit
This calm Sabbath day.
Fair is the canopy
Over him seen,
Penciled by Nature's hand,
Black, brown, and green.
Green is his surplice,
Green are his bands;
In his queer little pulpit
The little priest stands.

And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the greensward haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd,
You shall see him brought to bay.
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!

Meek little faces
  Upturned and pale;
Wildwood geraniums,
  All in their best,
Languidly leaning
  In purple gauze dressed:
All are assembled
  This sweet Sabbath day
To hear what the priest
  In his pulpit will say.

Look! White Indian pipes
  On the green mosses lie!
Who has been smoking
  Profanely so nigh?

In black and gold velvet,
So gorgeous to see,
Comes with his bass voice
The chorister bee.
Green fingers playing
Unseen on wind lyres, —
Low-singing bird voices —
These are his choirs.
The violets are deacons;
I know by the sign
That the cups which they carry
Are purple with wine.
And the columbines bravely
As sentinels stand
On the lookout with all their
Red trumpets in hand.

Meek-faced anemones
Drooping and sad;
Great yellow violets,
Smiling out glad;
Buttercup's faces
Beaming and bright;
Clovers, with bonnets —
Some red and some white;
Daisies, their white fingers
Half clasped in prayer;
Dandelions, proud of
The gold of their hair;
Innocents, children
Guileless and frail,

Meek little faces
  Upturned and pale;
Wildwood geraniums,
  All in their best,
Languidly leaning
  In purple gauze dressed:
All are assembled
  This sweet Sabbath day
To hear what the priest
  In his pulpit will say.

Look! White Indian pipes
  On the green mosses lie!
Who has been smoking
  Profanely so nigh?

Rebuked by the preacher
The mischief is stopped,
But the sinners, in haste,
Have their little pipes dropped.

Let the wind with the fragrance
Of fern and black birch,
Blow the smell of the smoking
Clean out of our church!
So much for the preacher:
The sermon comes next, —
Shall we tell how he preached it,
And where was his text?

Alas! Like too many
Grown-up folks who play
At worship in churches
Man-builded to-day, —
We heard not the preacher
Expound or discuss;
But we looked at the people,
And they looked at us.

We saw all their dresses,
Their colors and shapes,
The trim of their bonnets,
The cut of their capes.
We heard the wind organ,
The bee and the bird,
But of Jack in the Pulpit
We heard not a word.

JIM CROW

CLINTON SCOLLARD

From "The Lyric Bough," by permission

Mr. Scollard graduated from Hamilton College, then studied at Harvard, and abroad. Those of his poems that interest young people most are in his "Lyric Bough" and "A Boy's Book of Rhyme."

OH, say, Jim Crow,
Why is it you always go
With a gloomy coat of black
The year long on your back?
Why don't you change its hue,
At least for a day or two,
To red, or green, or blue?
And why do you always wear
Such a sober, somber air,
As glum as the face of Care?
I wait for your reply,
And into the peaceful pause
There comes your curious, croaking cry,—
"Oh, because! 'cause! 'cause!"

Oh, say, Jim Crow,
Why, when the farmers sow,
And the corn springs up in the row,
And the days that once were brief
Grow long, and laugh into leaf,
Do you play the rascally thief?
I can see by the look in your eye,—
Wary and wise and sly,—

That you know the code in vogue;
Why will you, then, oh, why,
Persist in the path of the rogue?
I hearken for your reply,
And into the empty pause
There rings your graceless, grating cry, —
"Oh, because! 'cause! 'cause!"

And say, Jim Crow,
With all of the lore you know, —
Lore of the wood and field,
Lore of the clouds, and the clear
Depths of the atmosphere,
To our duller ken concealed, —
Why is it you ever speak
With a mingled squawk and squeak?
You, with your talents all,
And your knowledge of this and that,
Why must you sing like a squall,
And talk like a perfect "flat"?
I listen for your reply,
But in the lapse and the pause
All I hear is your impudent cry, —
"Oh, because! 'cause! 'cause!"

THE NUTCRACKERS OF NUTCRACKER LODGE

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

Harriet Beecher Stowe was a sister of Henry Ward Beecher. She was a very voluminous writer. The most popular of all her works was "Uncle Tom's Cabin," a book written to show the horrors of slavery. More than half a million copies of the book were sold in the United States within five years of its publication. It has been translated into nearly a score of languages.

MR. and Mrs. Nutcracker were as respectable a pair of squirrels as ever wore gray brushes over their backs. They were animals of a settled and serious turn of mind, not supposed to run after vanities and novelties, but filling their station in life with prudence and sobriety. Nutcracker Lodge was a hole in a sturdy old chestnut, overhanging a shady dell, and was held to be as respectably kept an establishment as there was in the whole forest.

Even Miss Jennie Wren, the greatest gossip of the neighborhood, never found anything to criticize in its arrangements, and old Parson Too-whit, a venerable owl who inhabited a branch somewhat more exalted, as became his profession, was in the habit of saving himself much trouble in his parochial exhortations by telling his parishioners in short to "look at the Nutcrackers" if they wanted to see what it was to live a virtuous life. Everything had gone on prosperously with them, and they had reared many successive families of young Nutcrackers, who went forth to assume their places in the forest life, and to reflect credit on their bringing up, — so that natu-

rally enough they began to have a very easy way of considering themselves models of wisdom.

But at last it came along, in the course of events, that they had a son named Featherhead, who was destined to bring them a great deal of anxiety. Nobody knows what the reason was, but it was a fact, that Master Featherhead was as different from all the former children of this worthy couple as if he had been dropped out of the moon into their nest, instead of coming into it in the general way. Young Featherhead was a squirrel of good parts and a lively disposition, but he was sulky and contrary and unreasonable, and always finding matter of complaint in everything his respectable papa and mamma did.

Instead of assisting in the cares of the family, picking up nuts and learning other lessons proper to a young squirrel, he seemed to settle himself from his earliest years into a sort of lofty contempt for the Nutcrackers, for Nutcracker Lodge, and for all the good old ways and institutions of the domestic hole, which he declared to be stupid and unreasonable, and entirely behind the times.

To be sure he was always on hand at mealtimes, and played a very lively tooth on the nuts which his mother had collected, always selecting the very best for himself; but he seasoned his nibbling with so much grumbling and discontent, and so many severe remarks, as to give the impression that he considered himself a peculiarly ill-used squirrel in having to "eat their old grub," as he very unceremoniously called it.

Papa Nutcracker, on these occasions, was often fiercely indignant, and poor little Mamma Nutcracker would shed tears, and beg her darling to be a little more reasonable;

but the young gentleman seemed always to consider himself as the injured party.

Now nobody could tell why or wherefore Master Featherhead looked upon himself as injured and aggrieved, since he was living in a good hole, with plenty to eat, and without the least care or labor of his own; but he seemed rather to value himself upon being gloomy and dissatisfied. While his parents and brothers and sisters were cheerfully racing up and down the branches, busy in their domestic toils, laying up stores for the winter, Featherhead sat gloomily apart, declaring himself weary of existence, and feeling himself at liberty to quarrel with everybody and everything about him.

Nobody understood him, he said; he was a squirrel of peculiar nature and needed peculiar treatment, and nobody treated him in a way that did not grate on the finer nerves of his feelings. He had higher notions of existence than could be bounded by that old rotten hole in a hollow

young scapegrace a little longer; and secretly in his silly old heart he revolved the question whether possibly it might not be that a great genius was actually come to his household.

The Nutcrackers belonged to the old established race of the Grays, but they were sociable, friendly people,

and kept on the best of terms with all branches of the Nutcracker family. The Chipmunks of Chipmunk Hollow were a very lively, cheerful, sociable race, and on

Featherhead looked down upon him with contempt, and said he had no tact, and couldn't see when he wasn't wanted.

It was wonderful to see how, by means of persisting in remarks like these, young Featherhead at last got all his family to look up to him as something uncommon. Though he added nothing to the family, and required more to be done for him than all the others put together, — though he showed not the smallest real perseverance or ability in anything useful, — yet somehow all his brothers and sisters, and his poor, foolish old mother, got into a way of regarding him as something wonderful, and of delighting in his sharp sayings as if they had been the wisest things in the world.

But at last old papa declared that it was time for Featherhead to settle himself to some business in life, roundly declaring that he could not always have him as a hanger-on in the paternal hole.

"What are you going to do, my boy?" said Tip Chipmunk to him one day. "We are now driving a thriving trade in hickory nuts, and if you would like to join us —"

"Thank you," said Featherhead, "but I confess I have no fancy for anything so slow as the hickory trade; I was never made to grub and delve in that way."

The fact was, that Featherhead had lately been forming alliances such as no reputable squirrel should even think of. He had more than once been seen going out evenings with the Rats of Rat Hollow, a race whose reputation for honesty was more than doubtful. The fact was, further, that old Longtooth Rat, an old sharper and money lender, had long had his eye on Featherhead as just about silly

enough for their purposes, — engaging him in what he called a speculation, but which was neither more nor less than downright stealing.

Near by the chestnut tree where Nutcracker Lodge was situated was a large barn filled with corn and grain, besides many bushels of hazelnuts, chestnuts, and walnuts. Now old Longtooth proposed to Featherhead that he should nibble a passage into this loft, and there establish himself in the commission business, passing the nuts and corn to him as he wanted them. Old Longtooth knew what he was about in the proposal, for he had heard talk of a brisk Scotch terrier that was about to be bought to keep the rats from the grain; but you may be sure he kept his knowledge to himself, so Featherhead was none the wiser for it.

"The nonsense of fellows like Tip Chipmunk!" said Featherhead to his admiring brothers and sisters. "The perfectly stupid nonsense! There he goes, delving and poking, picking up a nut here and a grain there, when I step into property at once."

"But I hope, my son, you are careful to be honest in your dealings," said old Nutcracker, who was a very moral squirrel.

With that young Featherhead threw his tail saucily over one shoulder, winked knowingly to his brothers, and said, "Certainly, sir! If honesty consists in getting what you can while it is going, I mean to be honest."

Very soon Featherhead appeared to his admiring companions in the height of prosperity. He had a splendid hole in the midst of a heap of chestnuts, and he literally seemed to be rolling in wealth; he never came home without showering lavish gifts on his mother and sisters; he

wore his tail over his back with a buckish air, and patronized Tip Chipmunk with a gracious nod whenever he met him, and thought the world was going well with him.

But one luckless day, as Featherhead was lolling in his hole, up came two boys with the friskiest, wiriest Scotch terrier you ever saw. His eyes blazed like torches, and poor Featherhead's heart died within him as he heard the boys say, "Now we'll see if we can catch the rascal that eats our grain."

Featherhead tried to slink out at the hole he had gnawed to come in by, but found it stopped.

"Oh, you are there, are you, Mister?" said the boy. "Well, you don't get out; and now for a chase!"

And, sure enough, poor Featherhead ran distracted with terror up and down, through the bundles of hay, between barrels, and over casks; but with the barking terrier ever at his heels, and the boys running, and shouting, and cheering his pursuer on. He was glad at last to escape through

a crack, though he left half his fine brush behind him, — for Master Wasp the terrier made a snap at it just as he was going, and cleaned all the hair off of it, so that it was as bare as a rat's tail.

Poor Featherhead limped off, bruised and beaten and bedraggled, with the boys and the dog still after him; and they would have caught him after all, if Tip Chipmunk's hole had not stood hospitably open to receive him. Tip took him in, like a good-natured fellow as he was, and took the best of care of him ; but the glory of Featherhead's tail had departed forever. He had sprained his left paw, and got a chronic rheumatism, and the fright and fatigue which he had gone through had broken up his constitution, so that he never again could be what he had been ; but Tip gave him a situation as under clerk in his establishment, and from that time he was a sadder and wiser squirrel than he had ever been before.

A FINE DAY

MICHAEL DRAYTON

CLEAR had the day been from the dawn,
All chequered was the sky,
Thin clouds like scarfs of cobweb lawn
Veiled heaven's most glorious eye.
The wind had no more strength than this,
That leisurely it blew,
To make one leaf the next to kiss
That closely by it grew.

A LITTLE GOOSE

ELIZA SPROAT TURNER

THE chill November day was done,
The working world home faring;
The wind came roaring through the streets,
And set the gas lights flaring;
And hopelessly and aimlessly,
The scarred old leaves were flying, —
When, mingled with the soughing wind,
I heard a small voice crying.

And, shivering on the corner, stood
A child of four, or over;
No cloak or hat her small, soft arms
And wind-blown curls to cover;
She cherished in her wee, cold hand
A bunch of faded clover.

And, one hand round her treasure, while
She slipped in mine the other,
Half-scared, half-confidential, said,
"Oh! Please, I want my mother."
"Tell me your street and number, pet;
Don't cry: I'll take you to it."
Sobbing, she answered, "I forget:
The organ made me do it.

"He came and played at Miller's step, —
The monkey took the money;
I followed down the street because
That monkey was so funny.

I've walked about a hundred hours
From one street to another;
The monkey's gone; I've spoiled my flowers; —
Oh! Please, I want my mother."

"But what's your mother's name? And what
The street? Now think a minute."
"My mother's name is Mother Dear;
The street — I can't begin it."
"But what is strange about the house,
Or new, — not like the others?"
"I guess you mean my trundle-bed, —
Mine and my little brother's.

"Oh dear! I ought to be at home
To help him say his prayers, —
He's such a baby he forgets;
And we are both such players;
And there's a bar between to keep
From pitching on each other,
For Harry rolls when he's asleep:
Oh dear! I want my mother."

The sky grew stormy; people passed
All muffled, homeward faring.
"You'll have to spend the night with me,"
I said at last, despairing.
I tied a kerchief round her neck:
"What ribbon's this, my blossom?"
"Why, don't you know?" she, smiling, said,
And drew it from her bosom.

A card with number, street, and name!
My eyes astonished met it;
"For," said the little one, "you see
I might sometime forget it,
And so I wear a little thing
That tells you all about it;
For mother says she's very sure,
I should get lost without it."

THE CHILD AND THE FAIRIES

ANONYMOUS

THE woods are full of fairies!
The trees are all alive:
The river overflows with them,
See how they dip and dive!
What funny little fellows!
What dainty little dears!
They dance and leap, and prance and peep,
And utter fairy cheers.

. . . . . .

I'd like to tame a fairy,
To keep it on a shelf,
To see it wash its little face,
And dress its little self.
I'd teach it pretty manners,
It always should say "please;"
And then, you know, I'd make it sew,
And curtsy with its knees.

THE SILVER BIRD'S NEST

HANNAH F. GOULD

A STRANDED soldier's epaulet
The waters cast ashore;
A little wingèd rover met,
And eyed it o'er and o'er.
The silver bright so pleased her sight
On that lone idle vest,
She knew not why she should deny
Herself a silver nest.

The shining wire she pecked and twirled;
Then bore it to her bough,
Where on a flowery twig 'twas curled,
The bird can show you how.
But when enough of that bright stuff
The cunning builder bore,
Her house to make, she would not take,
Nor did she covet more.

And when the little artisan,
With neither pride nor guilt,
Had entered in her pretty plan,
Her nesting place had built,
With here and there a plume to spare
About her own light form,
Of these, inlaid with skill, she made
A lining soft and warm.

But do you think the tender brood
She fondled there and fed,
Were prouder when they understood
The sheen about their bed?
Do you suppose they ever rose,
Of higher powers possessed,
Because they knew they peeped and grew
Within a silver nest?

THE BOBOLINK

WASHINGTON IRVING

THE happiest bird of our spring, and one that rivals the European lark, in my estimation, is the Bobolink. He arrives at that choice portion of the year, which, in this latitude, answers to the description of the month of

May, so often given by the poets. With us it begins about the middle of May, and lasts till nearly the middle of June.

Earlier than this, the winter is apt to return on its traces, and to blight the opening beauties of the year; and later than this, begin the parching, and panting, and dissolving heats of summer. But in this genial interval, Nature is in all her freshness and fragrance; "the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

The trees are now in their fullest foliage and the brightest verdure; the woods are gay with the clustered flowers of the laurel; the air is perfumed by the sweetbrier and the wild rose; the meadows are enameled with clover blossoms; while the young apple, the peach, and the plum begin to swell, and the cherry to glow among the green leaves.

This is the chosen season of revelry of the Bobolink. He comes amidst the pomp and fragrance of the season; his life seems all sensibility and enjoyment, all song and sunshine. He is to be found in the soft blossoms of the freshest and sweetest meadows; and is most in song when the clover is in blossom.

He perches on the topmost twig of a tree, or on some flaunting weed, and as he rises and sinks with the breeze, pours forth a succession of rich tinkling notes; crowding one upon another, like the outpouring melody of the skylark, and possessing the same rapturous character.

Sometimes he pitches from the summit of a tree, begins his song as soon as he gets upon the wing, and flutters

tremulously down to the earth, as if overcome with ecstasy at his own music. Sometimes he is in pursuit of his paramour; always in full song, as if he would win her by his melody; and always with the same appearance of intoxication and delight.

Of all the birds of our groves and meadows, the Bobolink was the envy of my boyhood. He crossed my path in the sweetest weather, and in the sweetest season of the year, when all Nature called to the fields, and the rural feeling throbbed in every bosom; but when I, luckless urchin, was doomed to be mewed up, during the livelong day, in a schoolroom, it seemed as if the little varlet mocked at me, as he flew by in full song, and sought to taunt me with his happier lot. Oh, how I envied him! No lessons, no task, no school; nothing but holiday, frolic, green fields, and fine weather.

THE CRATCHITS' CHRISTMAS DINNER

CHARLES DICKENS

THEN up rose Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for a sixpence; and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the corners of his monstrous shirt-collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honor of the day) into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable Parks. And now two

smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelled the goose, and known it for their own; and, basking in luxurious thoughts of sage and onion, these young Cratchits danced about the table, and exalted Master Peter Cratchit to the skies, while he (not proud, although his collar nearly choked him) blew the fire, until the slow potatoes, bubbling up, knocked loudly at the saucepan lid to be let out and peeled.

"What has ever got your precious father, then?" said Mrs. Cratchit. "And your brother, Tiny Tim? And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half an hour!"

"Here's Martha, mother!" said a girl, appearing as she spoke.

"Here's Martha, mother!" cried the two young Cratchits. "Hurrah! There's *such* a goose, Martha!"

"Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!" said Mrs. Cratchit, kissing her a dozen times, and taking off her shawl and bonnet for her with officious zeal.

"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night," replied the girl, "and had to clear away this morning, mother!"

"Well! Never mind so long as you are come," said Mrs. Cratchit. "Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye!"

"No, no! There's father coming," cried the two young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once. "Hide, Martha, hide!"

So Martha hid herself, and in came little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter, exclusive of

the fringe, hanging down before him; and his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!

"Why, where's our Martha?" cried Bob Cratchit, looking round.

"Not coming," said Mrs. Cratchit.

"Not coming!" said Bob, with a sudden declension in his high spirits; for he had been Tim's blood horse all the way from church, and had come home rampant. "Not coming home upon Christmas Day!"

Martha did not like to see him disappointed, if it were only in joke; so she came out prematurely from behind the closet door, and ran into his arms, while the two young Cratchits hustled Tiny Tim, and bore him off into the washhouse, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

"And how did little Tim behave?" asked Mrs. Cratchit, when she had rallied Bob on his credulity, and Bob had hugged his daughter to his heart's content.

"As good as gold," said Bob, "and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant for them to remember, upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see."

Bob's voice was tremulous when he told them this and trembled more when he said that Tiny Tim was growing strong and hearty.

His active little crutch was heard upon the floor, and back came Tiny Tim before another word was spoken, escorted by his brother and sister to his stool beside the fire; and while Bob, turning up his cuffs, — as if, poor fellow, they were capable of being made more shabby, — compounded some hot mixture in a jug with gin and lemons, and stirred it round and round, and put it on the hob to simmer, Master Peter and the two ubiquitous young Cratchits went to fetch the goose, with which they soon returned in high procession.

Such a bustle ensued that you might have thought a goose the rarest of all birds; a feathered phenomenon, to which a black swan was a matter of course, — and in truth it was something very like it in that house. Mrs. Cratchit made the gravy (ready beforehand in a little saucepan) hissing hot; Master Peter mashed the potatoes with incredible vigor; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce; Martha dusted the hot plates; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves, and mounting guard at their posts, crammed spoons into their mouths, lest they should shriek for goose before their turn came to be helped. At last the dishes were set on, and grace was said. It was succeeded by a breathless pause, as Mrs. Cratchit, looking slowly all along the carving knife, prepared to plunge it into the breast; but when she did, and when the long-expected gush of stuffing issued forth, one murmur of delight arose all round the board, and even Tiny Tim, excited by the two young Cratchits, beat on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cried "Hurrah!"

There never was such a goose. Bob said he didn't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavor, size and cheapness, were the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by apple sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family ; indeed, as Mrs. Cratchit said with great delight (surveying one small atom of a bone upon the dish,) they hadn't ate it all at last! Yet every one had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits in particular were steeped in sage and onions to the eyebrows! But now, the plates being changed by Miss Belinda, Mrs. Cratchit left the room alone — too nervous to bear witnesses — to take the pudding up, and bring it in.

Suppose it should not be done enough! Suppose it should break in turning out! Suppose somebody should have got over the wall of the back yard and stolen it, while they were merry with the goose, — a supposition at which the two young Cratchits became livid!

Hallo! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like a washing day! That was the cloth. A smell like an eating house and a pastry cook's next door to each other, with a laundress's next door to that! That was the pudding! In half a minute Mrs. Cratchit entered — flushed, but smiling proudly — with the pudding, like a speckled cannon ball, so hard and firm, blazing in half of half-a-quartern of ignited brandy, and bedight with Christmas holly stuck into the top.

Oh, a wonderful pudding! Bob Cratchit said, and calmly, too, that he regarded it as the greatest success achieved by Mrs. Cratchit since their marriage. Mrs. Cratchit said that, now the weight was off her mind, she

would confess that she had her doubts about the quantity of the flour. Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody said or thought it was at all a small pudding

for a large family. It would have been a flat heresy. Any Cratchit would have blushed to hint at such a thing.

At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the

hearth swept, and the fire made up. The compound in the jug being tasted, and considered perfect, apples and oranges were put upon the table, and a shovelful of chestnuts on the fire. Then all the Cratchit family drew around the hearth in what Bob Cratchit called a circle, meaning half a one; and at Bob Cratchit's elbow stood the family display of glass, — two tumblers, and a custard cup without a handle.

These held the hot stuff from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done; and Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed: —

"A Merry Christmas to all of us, my dears. God bless us!"

Which all the family reëchoed.

"God bless us every one!" said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

LITTLE CHARLEY

CHARLES DICKENS

WE found the house, to which we had been directed by a friend of my guardian, and went up to the top room. I tapped at the door, and a little shrill voice inside said: "We are locked in; Mrs. Blinder's got the key."

We had been prepared for this by Mrs. Blinder, the shopkeeper below, who had given us the key of the room.

I applied the key on hearing this, and opened the door. In a poor room, with a sloping ceiling, and containing very little furniture, was a mite of a boy, some

five or six years old, nursing and hushing a heavy child of eighteen months. There was no fire, though the weather was cold; both children were wrapped in some poor shawls and tippets as a substitute. Their clothing was not so warm, however, but that their noses looked red and pinched and their small figures shrunken, as the boy walked up and down, nursing and hushing the child, with its head on his shoulder.

"Who has locked you up here alone?" we naturally asked.

"Charley," said the boy, standing still to gaze at us.

"Is Charley your brother?"

"No. She's my sister Charlotte. Father called her Charley."

"Where is Charley now?"

"Out a-washing," said the boy, beginning to walk up and down again, and taking the baby's nankeen bonnet much too near the bedstead by trying to gaze at us at the same time.

We were looking at one another and at these two children, when there came into the room a very little girl, childish in figure, but shrewd and older looking in the face—pretty faced, too—wearing a womanly sort of a bonnet much too large for her and drying her bare arms on a womanly sort of apron.

Her fingers were white and wrinkled with washing, and the soapsuds were yet smoking which she wiped off her arms. But for this she might have been a child playing at washing and imitating a poor working woman with a quick observation of the truth.

She had come running from some place in the neighbor-

hood, and had made all the haste she could. Consequently, though she was very light, she was out of breath and could not speak at first, as she stood panting, and wiping her arms, and looking quietly at us.

"Oh, here's Charley!" said the boy.

The child he was nursing stretched forth its arms and cried out to be taken by Charley. The little girl took it in a womanly sort of manner belonging to the apron and the bonnet, and stood looking at us over the burden that clung to her most affectionately.

"Is it possible," whispered my guardian, as we put a chair for the little creature and got her to sit down with her load, — the boy keeping close to her, holding to her apron, — "that this child works for the rest! Look at this! Look at this!"

It was a thing to look at. The three children close together, and two of them relying solely on the third, and the third so young and yet with an air of age and steadiness that sat so strangely on the childish figure.

"Charley, Charley," said my guardian, "how old are you?"

"Over thirteen, sir," replied the child.

"Oh, what a great age!" said my guardian. "What a great age, Charley!"

I cannot describe the tenderness with which he spoke to her, half playfully, yet all the more compassionately and mournfully.

"And do you live alone here with these babies, Charley?" said my guardian.

"Yes, sir," returned the child, looking up into his face with perfect confidence, "since father died."

"And how do you live, Charley? Oh, Charley," said my guardian, turning his face away for a moment, "how do you live?"

"Since father died, sir, I've gone out to work. I'm out washing to-day."

"God help you, Charley!" said my guardian. "You're not tall enough to reach the tub."

"In pattens,[1] I am, sir," she said quickly. "I've got a high pair that belonged to mother."

"And when did mother die? Poor mother!"

"Mother died just after Emma was born," said the child, glancing at the face upon her bosom. "Then father said I was to be as good a mother to her as I could. And so I tried. And so I worked at home, and did cleaning and washing for a long time before I began to go out. And that's how I know how, don't you see, sir?"

"And do you often go out?"

"As often as I can," said Charley, opening her eyes and smiling, "because of earning sixpences and shillings."

"And do you always lock the babies up when you go out?"

"To keep them safe, sir, don't you see?" said Charley. "Mrs. Blinder comes up now and then, and Mr. Gridley comes up sometimes, and perhaps I can run in sometimes; and they can play, you know, and Tom isn't afraid of being locked up. Are you, Tom?"

"No-o!" said Tom, stoutly.

"When it comes on dark, the lamps are lighted down in the court, and they show up here quite bright. Don't they, Tom?"

[1] Pattens, wooden soles to keep the feet out of the mud.

"Yes, Charley," said Tom; "almost quite bright."

"Then he's as good as gold," said the little creature — oh! in such a motherly, womanly way. "And when Emma's tired he puts her to bed. And when he's tired, he goes to bed himself. And when I come home and light the candle and have a bit of supper, he sits up again and has it with me. Don't you, Tom?"

"Oh, yes, Charley," said Tom. "That I do!" And either in this glimpse of the great pleasure of his life, or in gratitude and love for Charley, who was all in all for him, he laid his face among the scanty folds of her frock and passed from laughing to crying.

It was the first time since our entry that a tear had been shed among these children. The little orphan girl had spoken of their father and their mother as if all that sorrow were subdued by the necessity of taking courage, and by her childish importance in being able to work, and by her bustling, busy way. But now, when Tom cried — although she sat quite tranquil, looking quietly at us, and did not by any movement disturb a hair of the head of either of her little charges — I saw two silent tears fall down her face.

I stood at the window with Ada, pretending to look at the housetops, and the blackened stack of chimneys, and the poor plants, and the birds, in little cages, belonging to the neighbors, when I found that Mrs. Blinder, from the shop below, had come in — perhaps it had taken her all this time to get upstairs — and was talking to my guardian.

"It's not much to forgive 'em the rent, sir," she said. "Who could take it from them?"

"Well, well," said my guardian to us two. "It is enough that the time will come when this good woman will find that it was much, and that forasmuch as she did it unto the least of these —

"This child," he added, after a few moments, "could she possibly continue this?"

"Really, sir, I think she might," said Mrs. Blinder, getting her heavy breath by painful degrees. "She's as handy as it's possible to be. Bless you, sir, the way she tended the two children after the mother died was the talk of the yard. And it was a wonder to see her with him after he was ill, it really was. 'Mrs. Blinder,' said he to me, the very last he spoke — he was lying there — 'Mrs. Blinder, I saw an angel sitting in this room last night along with my child, and I trust her to our Father.'"

We kissed Charley, and took her downstairs with us, and stopped outside the house to see her run away to her work. I don't know where she was going, but we saw her run — such a little, little creature, in her womanly bonnet and apron — through a covered way at the bottom of the court, and melt into the city's strife and sound like a dewdrop in an ocean.

One night after I had gone to my room, I heard a soft tap at my door. So I said, "Come in," and there came in a pretty little girl, neatly dressed in mourning, who dropped a curtsy.

"If you please, miss," said the little girl, in a soft voice, "I am Charley."

"Why, so you are!" said I, stooping down in astonishment, and giving her a kiss. "How glad I am to see you, Charley!"

"If you please, miss," pursued Charley, in the same soft voice, "I'm your maid."

"Charley?"

"If you please, miss, I'm a present to you, with Mr. Jarndyce's love."

I sat with my arm on Charley's neck, and looked at Charley.

"And oh, miss," says Charley, clapping hands, with the tears starting down her dimpled cheeks, "Tom's at school, if you please; and little Emma, she's with Mrs. Blinder, miss. And Tom, he would have been at school; and Emma, she would have been left with Mrs. Blinder; and I should have been here all a deal sooner, miss; only Mr. Jarndyce thought that Tom and Emma and I had better get a little used to parting first, we were so small. Don't cry, if you please, miss."

"I can't help it, Charley."

"No, miss, I can't help it," says Charley. "And if you please, miss, Mr. Jarndyce's love, and he thinks you'll like to teach me now and then. And, if you please, Tom and Emma and I are to see each other once a month. And I'm so happy and so thankful, miss," cried Charley, with a heaving heart, "and I'll try to be such a good maid!"

Charley dried her eyes, and entered on her functions, going in her matronly little way about and about the room, and folding up everything she could lay her hands upon.

Presently, Charley came creeping back to my side, and said: —

"Oh, don't cry, if you please, miss."

And I said again: —

"I can't help it, Charley."

And Charley said again: —

"No, miss; I can't help it."

So, after all, I did cry for joy, and indeed, so did she.

WE ARE SEVEN

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

I MET a little cottage girl:
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl,
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad;
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;—
Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? Seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."
She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

"Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven! I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be."

Then did the little maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree."

"You run about, my little maid;
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from mother's door,
And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her from her pain;
And then she went away.

"So in the churchyard she was laid;
And when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
Quick was the little maid's reply,
"O Master, we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead;
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little maid would have her will;
And said, "Nay, we are seven."

SPEAK GENTLY

ANONYMOUS

SPEAK gently; it is better far
To rule by love than fear;
Speak gently; let no harsh word mar
The good we may do here.
Speak gently to the little child;
Its love be sure to gain;
Teach it in accents soft and mild;
It may not long remain.

Speak gently to the young; for they
Will have enough to bear;
Pass through this life as best as they may,
'Tis full of anxious care.
Speak gently to the aged one,
Grieve not the careworn heart,
Whose sands of life are nearly run;
Let such in peace depart.

Speak gently to the erring; know
They must have toiled in vain;
Perchance unkindness made them so;
Oh, win them back again.
Speak gently; 'tis a little thing
Dropped in the heart's deep well;
The good, the joy, that it may bring,
Eternity shall tell.

OVER AND OVER AGAIN

ANONYMOUS

OVER and over again,
No matter which way I turn,
I always find in the book of life,
Some lesson I have to learn.
I must take my turn at the mill,
I must grind out the golden grain,
I must work at my task with a resolute will,
Over and over again.

We cannot measure the need
Of even the tiniest flower,
Nor check the flow of the golden sands
That run through a single hour;
But the morning dews must fall,
And the sun and the summer rain
Must do their part, and perform it all
Over and over again.

Over and over again
The brook through the meadow flows,
And over and over again
The ponderous mill wheel goes.
Once doing will not suffice,
Though doing be not in vain;
And a blessing failing us once or twice,
May come if we try again.

The path that has once been trod,
Is never so rough to the feet;

And the lesson we once have learned,
  Is never so hard to repeat.
Though sorrowful tears must fall,
  And the heart to its depths be driven
With storm and tempest, we need them all
  To render us meet for heaven.

A PROBLEM IN DIVISION

FROM THE ARABIC

FAR to the east there lived, in the days of old, an Arab who was known in all the country round. Now this man had neither gold nor silver, houses nor lands; but of horses he had seven and ten.

Fleet as the wind, graceful as a deer, and gentle as a dove were each and all of these beautiful horses. Their owner loved them next to his own sons. Not one would he sell, — no, not for the wealth of kings or princes.

Now it came to pass that the Arab suddenly became ill unto death. And he called his three sons together that he might divide his riches among them. To the oldest, he gave one half of his horses, to the second son, one third, and to the youngest, one ninth.

When the days of mourning were ended, the sons met to divide the horses according to their father's will, and they were greatly troubled.

"How can I take one half of seventeen horses?" said the eldest son. "A living horse cannot be cut in twain."

"And how can I," said the second son, "possess one third of seventeen horses? But such was my father's command."

"My father's words I fain would keep," said the youngest son, "but one ninth of seventeen horses will give a merciful man but one."

"I see a holy man riding by," said the eldest son. "Let us make him our judge."

Now when the case was laid before the monk, he thought long and carefully. And then he spoke: —

"Accept, I pray thee, my poor steed, and let him be added to the seventeen." This was done, and the eighteen horses were brought before the judge.

"The eldest son may now take one half the horses," directed the monk. And the eldest son led forth nine.

"Let the second son take one third as his own," continued the wise man.

The second son called his favorite horses, and six noble horses came running to his side.

"One ninth is the share of the youngest son, and therefore two are his lot, for so do I judge," again said the wise monk.

"Well hast thou judged!" said all the sons. "And now, O holy man, name thy reward."

"I will take all the horses that are left," said the monk, with a smile. And he rode away with neither more nor less than his own.

THE FAIRIES OF CALDON-LOW

MARY HOWITT

AND where have you been, my Mary,
And where have you been from me?"

"I've been to the top of the Caldon-Low,
The midsummer night to see!"

"And what did you see, my Mary,
All up on the Caldon-Low?"
"I saw the blithe sunshine come down,
And I saw the merry winds blow."

"And what did you hear, my Mary,
All up on the Caldon Hill?"
"I heard the drops of water made,
And I heard the corn ears fill."

"Oh, tell me all, my Mary,
All, all that ever you know;
For you must have seen the fairies
Last night on the Caldon-Low."

"Then take me on your knee, mother,
And listen, mother of mine:
A hundred fairies danced last night,
And the harpers they were nine.

"And merry was the glee of the harp strings
And their dancing feet so small,
But, oh, the sound of their talking
Was merrier far than all!"

"And what were the words, my Mary,
That you did hear them say?"
"I'll tell you all, my mother,
But let me have my way.

"And some they played with the water
And rolled it down the hill;

'And this,' they said, 'shall speedily turn
The poor old miller's mill;

"'For there has been no water
Ever since the first of May;
And a busy man shall the miller be
By the dawning of the day!

"'Oh, the miller, how he will laugh,
When he sees the mill dam rise!
The jolly old miller, how he will laugh,
Till the tears fill both his eyes!'

"And some they seized the little winds,
That sounded over the hill,
And each put a horn into his mouth,
And blew so sharp and shrill!

"'And there,' said they, 'the merry winds go,
Away from every horn;
And those shall clear the mildew dank
From the blind old widow's corn:

"'Oh, the poor blind widow —
Though she has been blind so long,
She'll be merry enough when the mildew's gone,
And the corn stands stiff and strong!'

"And some they brought the brown linseed,
And flung it down from the Low;
'And this,' said they, 'by sunrise,
In the weaver's croft shall grow!

"'Oh, the poor lame weaver!
How will he laugh outright
When he sees his dwindling flax field
All full of flowers by night!'

"And then upspoke a brownie,
With a long beard on his chin;
'I have spun up all the tow,' said he,
'And I want some more to spin.

"'I've spun a piece of hempen cloth,
And I want to spin another —
A little sheet for Mary's bed
And an apron for her mother.'

"And with that I could not help but laugh,
And I laughed out loud and free;
And then on the top of the Caldon-Low,
There was no one left but me.

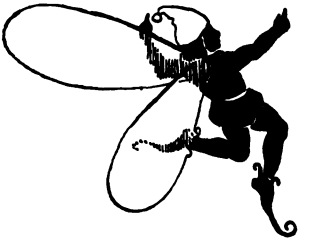
"And all on the top of the Caldon-Low
The mists were cold and gray,
And nothing I saw but the mossy stones
That round about me lay.

"But, as I came down from the hill-top,
I heard, afar below,
How busy the jolly miller was,
And how merry the wheel did go!

"And I peeped into the widow's field,
And, sure enough, was seen
The yellow ears of the mildewed corn
All standing stiff and green!

"And down by the weaver's croft I stole,
To see if the flax were high;
But I saw the weaver at his gate
With the good news in his eye!

"Now, this is all that I heard, mother,
And all that I did see;
So, prithee, make my bed, mother,
For I'm tired as tired can be!"



JOHN RIDD'S ADVENTURE

R. D. BLACKMORE

Blackmore is a popular English author. His most noted work is "Lorna Doone," from which this extract is taken. It is one of the very best English novels of what may be called the second class. Only a few great novels excel it. It is worthy of being read by every one.

BEING resolved to catch some loaches, whatever trouble it cost me, I set forth, in the forenoon of St. Valentine's Day, 1675. When I had traveled two miles or so, I found a good stream flowing softly into the body of our brook.

I buckled my breeches far up from the knee, expecting deeper water, and, crossing the Lynn, went stoutly up under the branches which hung so dark on the Bagworthy River.

Every moment the cold of the water got worse and worse, until I was fit to cry with it. And so, in a sorry plight, I came to an opening in the bushes, where a great black pool lay in front of me, whitened with snow, as I thought, at the sides, till I saw it was only foam froth. Skirting round one side, I came to a sudden sight and marvel, such as I never dreamed of. For, lo! I stood at the foot of a long pale slide of water, coming without any break for a hundred yards or more, and fenced on either side with cliff, sheer, and straight, and shining. The water neither ran, nor fell, nor leaped with any spouting, but made one even slope of it.

Then said I to myself: "John Ridd, these trees and pools and lonesome rocks and setting of sunlight are mak-

ing a grewsome coward of thee. Shall I go back to my mother so, and be called her fearless boy?"

But that which saved me from turning back was a strange, inquisitive desire to know what made the water come down like that and what there was at the top of it.

I crawled along over the fork of rocks where the water had scooped the stone out, and, shunning thus the ledge from whence it rose like the mane of a white horse, into the broad, black pool, softly I let my feet into the dip and rush of the torrent. The green wave came down like great bottles upon me, and my legs were gone from under me in a moment. But before I knew aught, except that I must die with a roar of water upon me, my fork, praise God, stuck fast in the rock and I was borne up upon it.

To my great dismay and affright, I saw that no choice was left me now except that I must climb somehow up that hill of water or else be washed down into the pool and whirl around it till it drowned me; for there was no chance of going back by the way I had gone into it.

Having said the Lord's Prayer, I grasped the good loach stick and began my course up the fearful torrent way. How I went carefully, step by step, never daring to straighten my knees, is more than I can tell clearly. The greatest danger of all was just where I saw no jeopardy, but ran up a patch of black ooze weed in a very boastful manner, being now not far from the summit.

Here I fell and was like to have broken my kneecap, and the torrent got hold of my other leg while I was indulging the bruised one. Then a knotting of cramp disabled me, and all of my body was sliding. But my elbow caught in a hole in the rock and so I managed to start again.

Now, being in the most dreadful fright because I was so near the top and hope was beating within me, I labored

hard with both legs and arms going like a mill. At last the rush of forked water drove me into the middle. Then I made up my mind to die at last; only it did seem such a pity after fighting so long to give in. The light was coming upon me, and again I fought toward it, when suddenly I felt fresh air and fell forward into the sunlight.

When I came to myself again, a little girl was kneeling at my side, rubbing my forehead tenderly with a dock leaf and a handkerchief. "Oh, I am so glad!" she whispered softly, as I opened my eyes and looked at her; "now you will try to be better, won't you?"

I had never heard so sweet a sound as came from be-

tween her bright red lips, while there she knelt and gazed at me; neither had I ever seen anything so beautiful as the large, dark eyes intent upon me, full of pity and wonder. Then I wandered with my hazy eyes down the black shower of her hair; and where it fell on the turf, among it, like an early star, was the first primrose of the season.

And since that day I think of her through all the rough storms of my life when I see an early primrose. "What is your name?" she said, "and how your feet are bleeding! Oh, I must tie them up for you! And no shoes nor stockings! Is your mother very poor, poor boy?"

"No," I said, being vexed at this; "we are rich enough to buy all this great meadow if we chose; and here are my shoes and stockings."

"Why they are quite as wet as your feet. Please to let me manage them; I will do it very softly."

"Oh, I don't think much of that," I replied. "But how you are looking at me! I never saw any one like you before. My name is John Ridd. What is your name?"

"Lorna Doone," she answered in a low voice, as if afraid of it, and hanging her head so that I could see only her forehead and eyelashes; "if you please my name is Lorna Doone; and I thought you must have known it." Then I stood up and touched her hand and tried to make her look at me; but she only turned away and her blushes turned into tears and her tears to long, low sobs.

"Don't cry," I said, "whatever you do. I am sure you have never done any harm. I will give you all my fish, Lorna, and catch some more for mother; only don't be angry with me." Here was I, a yeoman's boy, a yeoman

every inch of me; and there was she, a lady born, and dressed by people of rank and taste, who took pride in her beauty. Though some of her frock was touched with wet, her dress was pretty enough for the queen of all the angels! All from her waist to her neck was white, and the dark, soft weeping of her hair and the shadowy light of her eyes, like a wood rayed through with sunset, made it seem yet whiter.

Seeing how I heeded her, she turned to the stream in a bashful manner, and began to watch the water. I, for my part, being vexed at her behavior to me, took up all my things and made fuss about it to let her know I was going. But she did not call me back as I had made sure she would do; moreover, I knew that to try the descent was almost certain death to me, so at the mouth I came back to her and said: —

"Lorna."

"Oh, I thought you were gone," she answered; "why did you ever come here? Do you know what the robber band would do to us if they found you here with me? They would kill us both outright and bury us here by the water."

"But why should they kill me?"

"Because you have found the way up here, and they never could believe it. Now, please go; oh, please go! They will kill us both in a moment."

"But I tell you, Lorna, I never saw any one like you, and I must come back again to-morrow, and so must you; and I will bring you such lots of things — there are apples, and a thrush I caught with only one leg broken, and — only put your hand in mine — what little things

they are, Lorna, — and I will bring you the loveliest dog; I will show you just how long he is."

"Hush!"

A shout came down the valley; and all my heart was trembling like water after sunset, and Lorna's face was altered from pleasant play to terror. She looked up at me with such a power of weakness that I at once made up my mind to save her or die with her. A tingle went through all my bones, and I only longed for my carbine. The little girl took courage from me, and put her cheek quite close to mine.

"Come with me down the waterfall. I can carry you easily; and mother will take care of you."

"No, no," she cried as I took her up; "I will tell you what to do. They are only looking for me. You see that hole, that hole there?" She pointed to a little niche in the rock which verged the meadow about fifty yards away from us. In the fading of the twilight I could just descry it.

"Yes, I see it; but they will see me crossing the grass to get there."

"Look! Look!" She could hardly speak. "There is a way out from the top of it. Oh, here they come; I can see them."

The little maid turned as white as the snow which hung on the rocks above her, and then she began to sob aloud, but I drew her behind the withy bushes and close down to the water. Here they could not see either of us from the upper valley, and might have sought a long time for us.

Crouching in that hollow nest, I saw a dozen fierce men

come down on the other side of the water, not bearing any firearms, but looking lax and jovial, as if they were come from riding.

"Queen! Queen!" they were shouting here and there and now and then. "Where is our little queen gone?"

"They always call me 'queen,' and I am to be queen by and by," Lorna whispered to me, with her little heart beating against me; "oh, they are crossing by the timber there, and then they are sure to see us."

"Stop," said I; "now I see what to do. I must get into the water, and you must go to sleep."

"To be sure, yes, away in the meadow there. But how bitter cold it will be for you!"

"Now mind you never come again," she whispered over her shoulder as she crept away. "Only I shall come sometimes."

I crept into the water and lay down with my head between two blocks of stone. The dusk was deepening between the hills, and a white mist lay on the river. I could see every ripple and twig and glazing of twilight above it as bright as in a picture; so that to my ignorance there seemed no chance at all but what the men must find me. For all this time they were shouting and making such a hullabaloo that all the rocks round the valley rang.

I was now desperate between fear and wretchedness, till I caught a glimpse of the little maid whose beauty and whose kindliness had made me yearn to be with her. And then I knew that for her sake I was bound to be brave and hide myself. She was lying beneath a rock, feigning to be fast asleep.

Presently one of the great rough men came round a corner upon her, and there he stopped and gazed a while at her fairness and her innocence. Then he caught her up in his arms and kissed her.

"Here our queen is! Here's the queen; here's the captain's daughter!" he shouted to his comrades; "fast asleep! Now I have first claim to her, and no one else shall touch the child. Back, all of you!"

He set her dainty little form upon his great, square shoulder and her narrow feet in one broad hand; and so in triumph marched away, with the purple velvet of her skirt ruffling in his long black beard and the silken length of her hair fetched out, like a cloud by the wind, behind her.

Going up that darkened glen, little Lorna turned and put up a hand to me, and I put up a hand to her in the thick of the mist and the willows. She was gone, my little dear, and when I got over my fright, I longed to have more to say to her. Her voice to me was like a sweet, silver bell intoned to the small chords of a harp.

I crept into a bush for warmth and rubbed my shivering legs. Then, as daylight sunk below the forget-me-not of stars, I knew that now must be my time to get away.

MEMORY GEMS

THOUGH the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all. — LONGFELLOW.

Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year. — EMERSON.

A cunning man overreaches no one half so much as himself. — BEECHER.

But when men think they most in safety stand,
Their greatest peril often is at hand.
— DRAYTON.

Two things indicate a weak mind, — to be silent when it is proper to speak, and to speak when it is proper to be silent. — PERSIAN PROVERB.

Be still, sad heart, and cease repining;
Behind the cloud is the sun still shining.
— LONGFELLOW.

Let not one look of Fortune cast you down;
She were not Fortune if she did not frown.
— ORRERY.

In the lexicon of youth, which Fate reserves for a bright manhood, there's no such word as fail.
— BULWER.

He that will only believe what he can fully comprehend, must have a very long head or a very short creed.
— COLTON.

To most men experience is like the stern light of a ship, which illumines only the track it has passed. — COLERIDGE.

A man will confess his faults, but never his follies.
— CHESTERFIELD.

Kind hearts are gardens,
Kind thoughts are roots,
Kind words are blossoms,
Kind deeds are fruits;

Love is the sweet sunshine
That warms into life,
For only in darkness
Grow hatred and strife.

Lost, yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward offered, for they are gone forever.

— HORACE MANN.

Sin has many tools, but a lie is a handle that fits them all. — HOLMES.

There's always a river to cross,
Always an effort to make,
If there's anything good to win,
Any rich prize to take;
Yonder's the fruit we crave,
Yonder the charming scene;
But deep and wide, with a troubled tide,
Is the river that lies between.

He liveth long who liveth well,
All else is life but flung away;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of true things truly done each day.

The longest life is but a parcel of moments.

Profanity never did any man the least good. No man is richer, happier, or wiser for it. It recommends no one to society; it is disgusting to refined people and abominable to the good.

An idler is a watch that wants both hands,
As useless if it goes as when it stands.

— COWPER.

Oh, many a shaft at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant!
And many a word at random spoken,
May soothe, or wound, a heart that's broken.

— SCOTT.

Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all easy; and he who rises late must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night, while laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him. — FRANKLIN.

God helps them that help themselves. — FRANKLIN.

Look up and not down, look forward and not back, look out and not in, and lend a hand.— HALE.

Never chase a lie; let it alone, and it will run itself to death.

Good actions ennoble us, and we are the sons of our own deeds. — CERVANTES.

Immodest words admit of no defense,
For want of decency is want of sense.

— ROSCOMMON.

Of all bad things by which mankind are cursed,
Their own bad tempers surely are the worst.

— CUMBERLAND.

He who is good at making excuses is seldom good for anything else. — FRANKLIN.

All that a man gets by lying is that he is not believed when he tells the truth.

Waste of wealth is sometimes retrieved, waste of health seldom; but waste of time never.

Habit, if not resisted, soon becomes a necessity.
— St. Augustine.

To err is human; to forgive, divine. — Pope.

We give advice by the bucket, but take it by the grain.
— Alger.

One of the sublimest things in the world is plain truth.
— Bulwer.

He who waits to do a great deal of good at once will never do anything. — Johnson.

He prayeth well who loveth well,
Both man, and bird, and beast;
He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.
— Coleridge.

Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
For God hath made them so;
Let bears and lions growl and fight,
For 'tis their nature to.
— Watts.

This world is not so bad a world
As some would like to make it;
Though whether good or whether bad,
Depends on how we take it.
— Beck.

Little by little, sure and slow,
We fashion our future bliss or woe,
As the present passes away.

Our feet are climbing the stairway bright,
Up to the region of endless light,
Or gliding downward into the night;
Little by little, and day by day.

True worth is in being, not seeming,
In doing each day that goes by
Some little good, not in dreaming
Of great things to do by and by.
For whatever men say in blindness
And in spite of the fancies of youth,
There's nothing so kingly as kindness,
And nothing so royal as truth.

— ALICE CARY.

There is no one else who has the power to be so much your friend or so much your enemy as yourself.

Help the weak if you are strong,
Love the old if you are young,
Own a fault if you are wrong,
If you are angry hold your tongue.

Do all the good you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can, in every place you can.

That is a treacherous friend against whom you must always be on your guard. Such a friend is wine. — BOVEE.

In a calm sea every man is a pilot.

Mean men admire wealth; great men, glory.

Vain glory blossoms, but never bears.

Right sometimes sleeps, but never dies.

Sharp wits, like sharp knives, often cut their owners' fingers. — ARROWSMITH.

Many talk like philosophers, and live like fools.

What a man desires, he easily believes.

How beautiful is youth! How bright it gleams,
With its illusions, aspirations, dreams!
Book of beginnings, story without end,
Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend.
— SALUTAMUS.

The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving. — HOLMES.

Attempt the end and never stand in doubt;
Nothing's so hard but search will find it out.
— HERRICK.

A man has no more right to say an uncivil thing than to act one, no more right to say a rude thing to another than to knock him down. — JOHNSON.

Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part; there all the honor lies. — POPE.

Learn the luxury of doing good. — GOLDSMITH.

What is it to be a gentleman? It is to be honest, to be gentle, to be generous, to be brave, to be wise; and, possessing all these qualities, to exercise them in the most graceful outward manner. — THACKERAY.

All men that are ruined, are ruined on the side of their natural propensities. — BURKE.

Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow.
— POPE.

It is much easier to be critical than correct.

— BEACONSFIELD.

Profaneness is a low, groveling vice. He who indulges in it is no gentleman. I care not what his stamp may be in society, — I care not what clothes he wears, or what culture he boasts, — despite all his refinement, the light and habitual taking of God's name in vain betrays a coarse nature and a brutal will. — CHAPIN.

This is the best world that we live in,
To lend, or to spend, or to give in;
But to beg, or to borrow, or to get one's own,
'Tis the very worst world that ever was known.

Sow an act, and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, and you reap a character;
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.

Each man's homestead is his golden milestone,
Is the central point from which he measures every distance,
Through the gateways of the world around him.

It is not what we earn, but what we save, that makes us rich. It is not what we eat, but what we digest, that makes us strong. It is not what we read, but what we remember, that makes us useful.

A pebble in the streamlet scant
Has turned the course of many a river;
A dewdrop on the infant plant
Has warped the giant oak forever.

It takes two to tell a lie, — one to speak, and another to listen.

CENTRAL RESERVE

If wisdom's ways you'd wisely seek,
Five things observe with care:
Of whom you speak, to whom you speak,
And how, and when, and where.

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat;
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

— SHAKESPEARE.

Tact is the life of the five senses. It is the open eye, the quick ear, the judging taste, the keen smell, and the lively touch. Talent is power, tact is skill; talent is weight, tact is momentum; talent knows what to do, tact how to do it; talent is wealth, tact ready money.

— *London Atlas.*

What a world of gossip would be prevented if it were only remembered that a person who tells you of the faults of others intends to tell others of your faults.

It is better for a city to be governed by a good man than by good laws. — ARISTOTLE.

Labor is man's great function. He is nothing, he can be nothing, he can achieve nothing, he can fulfill nothing, without labor. — DEWEY.